The Michigan Daily

ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY FOUR YEARS OF EDITORIAL FREEDOM

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ADMINISTRATION

UMich fires full-time employee, suspends 4 from campus jobs for participating in pro-Palestine protest

Three students and one recent graduate were suspended from their jobs and one full-time employee was fired regarding a May 3 protest

BARRETT DOLATA
Daily News Editor

Ellie Vice/DAILY

Protesters link arms in solidarity to form a wall in front of police cars stationed outside the University of Michigan Museum of Art Friday night.

The University of Michigan Department of Human Resources sent letters to four students and one recent graduate April 7, suspending four from their campus jobs and warning one after a review of their conduct regarding a May 3, 2024 protest that began at the Gaza solidarity encampment and ended with protestors gathering at the University of Michigan Museum of Art. In addition, one full-time staff member was fired for their conduct during the protest.

The protest was an impromptu student-led action that started at the encampment and led to all entrances at UMMA. It grew to more than 200 U-M students, including members of Students Allied for Freedom and Equality and the TAHRIR Coalition, demanding the University divest from companies profiting off of Israel's military campaign in Gaza.

According to a letter obtained by The Michigan Daily that was sent to a suspended student by Amy Grier, associate director of University Human Resources, the actions of those suspended from their jobs violated the standard practice guide policy SPG 601.18, which addresses violence in the University community.

"During a private event, protesters interfered with law enforcement's ability to provide invitees safe and secure entry and exit from the premises," the letter read. "Despite law enforcement presence at the doors and around the building, and repeated instructions to refrain from obstructing their efforts, it appears that you did not comply and you interfered with law enforcement actions, including pushing back against law enforcement."

The TAHRIR Coalition released a statement Sunday clarifying a full-time employee had been terminated on Friday and banned from future employment with the University. According to the TAHRIR Coalition, the individual's employment began in October 2024, approximately five months after the May 3 protest.

"The staff member had requested that both their Union representative and legal counsel attend a meeting with Grier, but that request was denied," the statement reads. "During the meeting, Grier interrupted the Union representative when he attempted to advocate on the employee's behalf and insisted that only the employee could speak. When pressed, Grier failed to cite any university policy to justify these decisions."

One of the suspended students, who requested anonymity out of fear of retribution from the University, will be referred to as Blake in this article. In an interview with The Daily, Blake said they were given no warning before they received the April 7 message from Grier.

"I'm not really a core organizer within SAFE or TAHRIR," Blake said. "I was just at the protest to be a part of the show of numbers there, and I kind of just got randomly picked out by police. And then now, they're saying that — in the message I received — they're saying that I was being violent, which is so far from the truth."

Grier wrote the decision was effective immediately, ending all job duties and suspending Blake from working. If students wish to respond to allegations made in the letters, they must have contacted Greir to schedule a meeting with no later than 5 p.m. April 10. Blake said they scheduled a meeting to address the allegations in the letter.

"I care a lot about this issue, but I'm not the type to be combative or to put myself in a position where I can jeopardize my future," Blake said. "It's just kind of crazy to see the distortion of truth that is happening in real time, to me. And so I'm hoping that we can get some sort of justice for this."

Another suspended student, who also requested anonymity for fear of retribution from the University, wrote in an email to The Daily that HR alleged they violated the school's policy on violence, but cited the presence of police who used force and pepper spray.

"All criminal charges related to this protest were declined by prosecutors, so the University is now looking for other avenues to punish the demonstrators," the student wrote. "I am not surprised, as the Regents and University Administration have consistently demonstrated their opposition to due process for pro-Palestinian protesters."

The University could not be reached for comment in time for publication.

GOVERNMENT

ACLU of Michigan sues Trump for revoking UMich and Wayne State student visas

The ACLU also requested emergency injunction on behalf of four international students

CHRISTINA ZHANG
Daily News Editor

The ACLU of Michigan announced Thursday they have filed a federal lawsuit and request for an emergency injunction on behalf of four international students who attend Michigan universities, two of which attend the University of Michigan, after their F-1 student visa statuses were revoked.

The plaintiffs include a masters student studying mechanical engineering at the University and a student who has been pursuing a doctorate degree at the School for Environment and Sustainability. The two other students attend Wayne State University.

According to the lawsuit, filed in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan, none of the students have been charged or convicted of a crime in the United States, nor have they been active in any on-campus protests.

In its press release, the ACLU said President Donald Trump's administration's termination of international student visas at hundreds of universities across the country is a violation of the students' rights to due process.

"International students form a vital community at our state's universities, and unilaterally stripping students of their status violates the law," the press release read. "The lawsuit details how the termination of F-1 student status violates the students' due process rights because the government is required to provide advance notice and a meaningful opportunity to respond when taking such action."

The lawsuit specifies that the students' statuses had been terminated by the government's Student and Exchange Visitor Information Program without notifying them or their schools about the reasons behind the terminations.

Students learned of their status being terminated after they received an email from their respective universities.

"Instead of being notified by DHS or another government agency, Plaintiffs each received an email from their respective school informing them that the school learned during their periodic check of SEVIS records that the Plaintiff's student status had been terminated," the lawsuit read.

CAMPUS LIFE

BSU leads UMich community in protest against DEI cuts

'This university has undone decades of work'

GLENN HEDIN
Daily Staff Reporter

Hundreds of demonstrators chanted "we are the people, we are the power" on the Diag Thursday evening, as leaders of the Black Student Union led a crowd of University of Michigan students and community members in protest against the University's recent elimination of all diversity, equity and inclusion programs.

LSA senior Princess-J'Maria Mboup, BSU speaker, was the first speaker of the rally. She condemned cutting DEI programs as a reversal of decades of progress made by previous Black activists hailing as far back as the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s.

"We're seeing a quick regression back into the hostile, overtly white supremacist institution that (the University) was designed to be," Mboup said. "This university has undone decades of work centered around principles of diversity, equity and inclusion — principles that they've claimed for almost a decade to hold as core values to the institution. They've strategically taken down, all at once, the Office of DEI scholarships, programs and initiatives, including the campus-wide action item within DEI 2.0 that focused on enhancing Black student representation and experiences."

Ellie Vice/DAILY

Protesters hold up signs at the BSU protest on the Diag.

Mboup also expressed feeling betrayed by the University's decision after years of the administration claiming to support the principles of diversity, equity and inclusion.

"(University) President Santa Ono, Provost Laura McCauley and (Vice President) for Student Life Martino Harmon spent two and a half years telling me, to my face, that they were invested in our work and improving the experience of Black students," Mboup said. "I've personally spent nights and weekends working, skipped classes, failed exams, lost sleep and spent years of my life doing this work, so this cut for me is personal. For generations of student activists, it's personal. Their decisions have been cowardly and cruel, and to cut the culmination of so much labor is a knife in the backs of all of those who fought the good fight."

Art & Design senior Eaman Ali spoke at the event and criticized the University's Board of Regents for their refusal to divest from Israeli companies profiting from Israel's military campaign in Gaza. Ali also discussed inaction from the University regarding the termination of student visas and funding cuts as a result of President Donald Trump's administration.

"(The regents are) sitting back and watching as the federal government revokes the visas of 22 of our peers," Ali said. "What's more, as students of Color lose scholarships, as research to uplift our communities is cut, as measures to create access to this institution are erased, they are waffling and pretending that it's simply out of their hands."

Ali's speech continued, saying she felt the size of the University's endowment would empower the regents to be able to defend their students if they wished to do so.

"Make no mistake, the University of Michigan Board of Regents have a $19 billion endowment at their disposal and they're choosing to hang us out to dry," Ali said. "Make no mistake, the regents are not just cowardly in the face of fascism — they are fascists themselves."

In an interview with The Michigan Daily, LSA junior Keshava Demerath-Shanti said he believes it is important to let the administration know how harmful cuts to DEI programs are.

"This issue spans beyond just the campus itself," Demerath-Shanti said.

CONTINUED AT MICHIGANDAILY.COM

GOVERNMENT

U-M student visas terminated by federal government rises to 12

22 U-M affiliated individuals have had their visas terminated by the Department of Homeland Security, including 12 students and 10 graduates

SARAH PALUSHI
Daily Staff Reporter

The University of Michigan administration sent an email Wednesday afternoon notifying students, staff and faculty that 22 U-M affiliated individuals have had their visas terminated by the Department of Homeland Security, including 12 students and 10 graduates. This follows initial reports on Friday that the federal government revoked the F-1 visas of four U-M students. The email was signed by University President Santa Ono, Provost Laurie McCauley, Vice President for Student Life Martino Harmon and Vice President and General Counsel Timothy Lynch.

The University's International Center discovered the visa revocations while reviewing the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System, which tracks the status of student visas. The authors wrote the DHS has not shared information with the University regarding the reason for the terminations or the deletion of SEVIS records. However, the authors clarified no identifying information about the affected individuals was shared with law enforcement by the University.

"The federal government has not shared details on the specific reasons for these visa revocations or SEVIS record terminations," the authors wrote. "Please know the university has not provided lists or other identifying information to federal immigration or law-enforcement authorities relating to these students and graduates."

The authors also wrote the University is collaborating across campus to ensure affected students are aware of their rights, but there has not been any reported federal law enforcement activity on campus in relation to the visa terminations.

"We are working closely with offices, colleges and schools from across the university, to ensure the impacted individuals understand their options and have access to resources," the authors wrote. "At this time, we are not aware of any federal law enforcement activity on campus related to these terminations."

The email advised individuals with F-1 visas, which allow students to stay in the U.S. while studying at a recognized academic institution, or J-1 visas, which allow individuals to stay in the U.S. for work- or study-based exchange programs, to report changes to their address at least 10 days prior to moving. The authors also encouraged these students to carry the most recent I-94 record with them and save a digital copy of their I-20 or DS-2019 and passport ID. The email clarified that, if these visas are terminated, individuals will be advised to leave the country immediately.

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INDEX
Vol. CXXXVI No. 13
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NEWS....1 ARTS....3 OPINION....5 STATEMENT....6 MIC....9 SPORTS....11

CAMPUS LIFE

MUSIC Matters hosts student performers for annual SpringFest

'All the people are brought together, regardless of whether they're involved in music or not ... people are really connected across different schools and different interests.'

SARAH SPENCER
Daily Staff Reporter

On Friday, the University of Michigan student organization MUSIC Matters hosted their annual SpringFest music festival and street fair. The event, founded in 2011 to bring live music to campus and showcase student achievements, featured live student music and dance performances in the Diag, as well as food trucks and street vendors from local businesses. The celebration continued Sunday evening, when hundreds more guests crowded into the Michigan Theater for a concert featuring the California-based indie rock band SUN ROOM.

The festival ran from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., blocking off South State Street and North University Avenue as hundreds of students and community members gathered to watch live music performances on the grass and walk around the thrift pop-ups, food trucks and community information tables.

Performers included local artists and bands, such as payton&annabelle, Maddy Ringo and The Third Degree, as well as performances by student organizations, including Pure Dance, Female Gayo and Michigan Guitar Society.

In an interview with The Michigan Daily, LSA senior Jacob Vainberg, SpringFest co-chair, said SpringFest is dedicated to uplifting student groups and helping them reach the broader Ann Arbor community.

"SpringFest is a big festival that we use to get student orgs, student bands, local artists, to the forefront of the Ann Arbor public," Vainberg said. "We want to give a platform for local and student artists to be able to share their music and their sound with the city and the students here."

LSA and Music, Theatre & Dance freshman Andrea Bustillo, who attended the event, said she appreciated how the diverse range of performances created a sense of community.

"All the people are brought together, regardless of whether they're involved in music or not," Bustillo said. "It just shows how people are really connected across different schools and different interests, and everybody's just here to support each other."

Georgia McKay/DAILY
Students listen to Cedar Bend perform at SpringFest on the corner of South State Street and North University Avenue.

LSA sophomore Naya Ramaswami, who also attended SpringFest, said she thought the upbeat music matched the warm spring environment.

"It's really nice to celebrate spring, because today's the first sunny day in a while and it's been really depressing with cloudy weather," Ramaswami said. "I'm really excited to just hang out with my friends and not be stuck in a library all day."

LSA junior Morgan Dugan, SpringFest co-chair, said the musical performances drew students out to the event and she hoped they offered students a chance to unwind from schoolwork.

"Music is what brings everybody out here, hearing the music from across the Diag," Dugan said. "It's so fun to walk up and be like, 'Oh, there's a concert for free at my school.' It brings everybody together at a stressful time and gives you the opportunity to maybe relax and take a break from your studies."

CONTINUED AT MICHIGANDAILY.COM

ADMINISTRATION

UMich Alumni Association to fund remaining LEAD Scholars through graduation

The Alumni Association said the decision to cut the program would not have adverse financial effects on current recipients

CLEO SAWHNEY & DREW EBNER
Daily News Contributors

Following the University of Michigan Alumni Association's decision to discontinue their LEAD Scholars program, the association announced through email they will continue to fund the remaining LEAD Scholars until their graduation. This comes after the association's previous statement that they would only provide funding that had already been distributed for the winter semester.

The program originally provided merit-based scholarships to underrepresented communities on campus. In the recent email, Ayanna McConnell, Alumni Association president and CEO, announced the extension of LEAD Scholars' funding and said the decision to cut the program would not have adverse financial effects on current recipients.

"I know the ending of the LEAD Scholars program has caused stress and anxiety for you," McConnell wrote. "Since making the difficult decision to discontinue the LEAD Scholars program, it has been our top priority to explore options to support current students. I'm pleased to share that there will be no adverse financial impact for the remaining time you are enrolled at Michigan, as long as you remain in good academic standing."

In an interview with The Michigan Daily, Public Policy junior Lyndsey Del Castillo, a former LEAD Scholar, said the news that she would continue to receive funding from the University lacked information about where the money would come from.

"We received a very, very vague email about how we don't have to worry about our funding," Del Castillo said. "But we weren't really told if that's still going to be under LEAD funding or if they are going to do something else."

In an interview with The Daily, LSA sophomore Hayden O'Neal, a former LEAD Scholar, said she was initially surprised by the news that the LEAD Scholarship program was discontinued.

"Initially, I was shocked," O'Neal said. "I didn't expect it to happen so quickly, especially at the University of Michigan, since I thought we were more progressive. But in the end, I was like 'Oh, I'm not even surprised at this point.'"

O'Neal said the LEAD Scholars program had value outside of financial assistance, especially in creating a community for recipients on campus.

"We used to have community-building events, meetings every month and different opportunities to meet really important alumni," O'Neal said. "I don't think any of that is going to be happening anymore."

Del Castillo highlighted the importance of community within the LEAD Scholars program, as it allowed members to meet and connect with others in similar situations or from similar backgrounds.

"The goal of (the LEAD Scholars program) was to create a community for different marginalized groups and lower-income people at the University," Del Castillo said. "Especially since this University is really wealthy and there isn't really a space for people of differing identities."

Del Castillo said the program's monthly events, including professional development workshops and the Women in LEADership Symposium, were beneficial and brought resources to underserved students.

"Just a bunch of really cool events that were inspiring and helpful," Del Castillo said. "Especially for people that don't have parents that are college graduates, that don't really know how the process works. It definitely helped me navigate the University and find opportunities."

On their website, the Alumni Association said the program was discontinued in order to comply with guidance from the federal government. LSA junior Sydney Cyprian, current diversity, equity and inclusion chair of the Chi Omega sorority, said she felt the program was cut because of its association with DEI initiatives.

CONTINUED AT MICHIGANDAILY.COM

PHOTO OF THE WEEK

Bridgette Bol/DAILY
LSA junior Marissa Ewald crochets during the Crochet-a-Thon event in the Diag Tuesday afternoon.

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Do we need more 'Ted Lasso'?

ANA TORRESARPI
Daily Arts Contributor

On March 14 at 9:48 a.m., Apple TV+ posted a teaser for a fourth season of "Ted Lasso." This was a horrible idea.

Don't get me wrong — I love "Ted Lasso." When the show originally released in 2020, my 15-year-old self was immediately hooked. It came out at the perfect time; the pandemic had just confined everyone to their homes with nothing to do but bake bread, stress out and watch TV. By the time the premiere rolled around, everyone needed a good laugh, and "Ted Lasso" was ready to deliver.

After binge-watching the first season on my own, I forced my parents to put it on during dinner, introduced all of my friends to it over weekly Zoom chats and even bought show merchandise for myself (a "Believe" sticker still sits proudly on my laptop today). And I wasn't the only one who shared these sentiments — the first season alone received 20 Emmy nominations and brought home seven wins.

The show centers the titular Kansas native, Ted Lasso (Jason Sudeikis, "We're the Millers"), a Division II American football coach hired to train Premier League soccer (or as the British say, football) in England. His fish-out-of-water story creates both dramatic and comedic tension throughout the first season as he learns his way around the soccer pitch and English culture. But what makes the story so universally adored aren't the circumstances that Ted finds himself in, but rather Ted himself. Through relentless kindness, resounding enthusiasm and genuine authenticity, Ted immediately becomes the main draw to the show.

In seasons one and two, we watch as Ted struggles through a difficult divorce, panic attacks and traumatic memories, all while keeping a positive attitude and a smile on his face. The show became iconic for its feel-good tone and its ability to make viewers laugh, cry and smile at the same time. Beneath the surface of the two seasons, however, there was a lingering but undeniable truth: Ted Lasso won't be there forever.

The premise of the show — his status as a fish out of water — implies that, eventually, he'll find himself back in his usual pond. Although Ted is coaching in London now, he will inevitably return to Kansas. Multiple episodes focus on Ted's relationship with his son, Henry (Gus Turner, "Loki"), who visits occasionally but mostly chats with his dad over video calls. These moments reinforce the reality that there is only one clear ending for Ted: He must eventually be reunited with his son and, in doing so, leave London behind for good.

Season three makes this abundantly clear. Although it's not my favorite season by any means, it establishes very quickly that Ted Lasso is ready to go home. The first episode begins with a goodbye between Ted and Henry as his son leaves for America after visiting London for the summer. As Henry walks into the airport terminal, Ted looks on with deep longing in his eyes.

Throughout the entire season, there is a thick tension between Ted and the rest of the cast; he seems distant, unfocused and distracted when it comes to the football team and his relationships there. In episode 11, "Mom City," Ted's mother comes to visit for the express purpose of telling him that Henry misses his father. The episode ends with Ted breaking the news to his boss and dear friend, Rebecca (Hannah Waddingham, "The Fall Guy"), that he has to go home. The final episode, "So Long, Farewell," is dedicated to saying goodbye to Ted Lasso — not just the character, but the show itself. In the final moments of the series, viewers watch as Ted gets out of his taxi after a grueling nine-hour flight and falls right into the arms of his son.

After feeling like an outsider for so long, Ted is finally back where he feels most comfortable. It's a lovely ending to highlight the show's themes of change, acceptance, love and the strength and importance of close relationships, however temporary they may be. Season three was a fitting goodbye for Ted's character, allowing him to finally receive well-deserved comfort and closure for himself and his family.

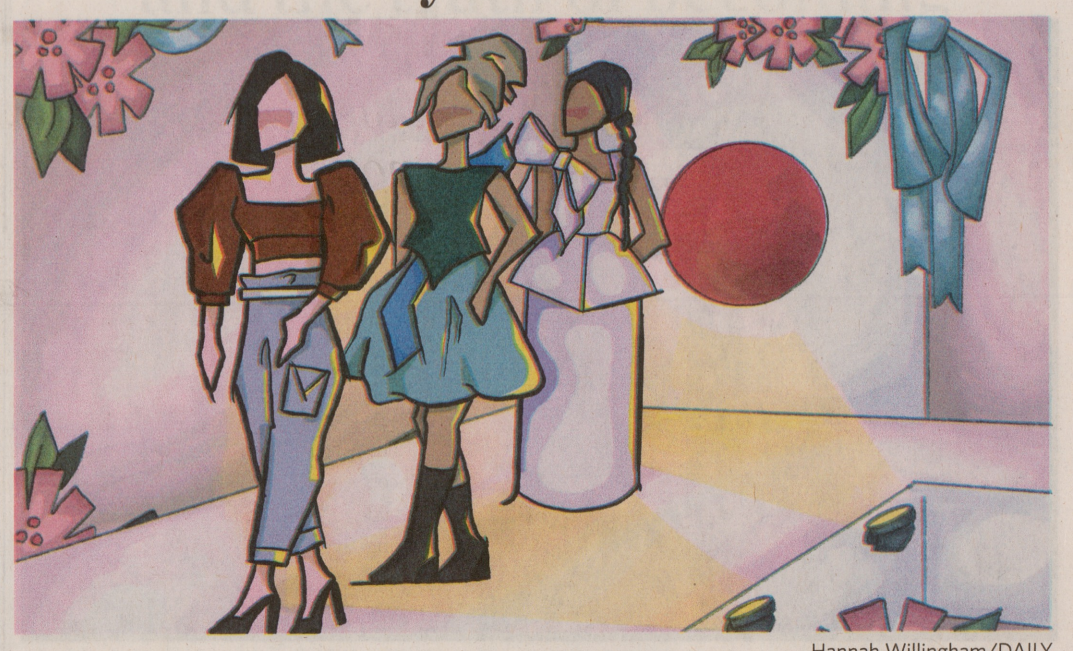
But now there's a new season in the works, and Sudeikis is set to return for the new season, leaving fans asking one question: Why?

"Ted Lasso" clearly was a popular series beloved by hundreds of thousands of people, and it's always hard for executives to say goodbye to that kind of success. However, regardless of any temptation to squeeze the show for every last dollar, it was clear the showrunners wanted to find a tasteful way of laying "Ted Lasso" to rest. Season three was that final goodbye, a respectful send-off for the series.

And when Apple TV+ announced the newest installment of the show, it inadvertently ruined the beautiful goodbye the showrunners had built.

CONTINUED AT MICHIGANDAILY.COM

The best runway collections from Tokyo Fashion Week



Hannah Willingham/DAILY.

ISABELLA CASAGRANDA
Daily Arts Writer

From March 17 to March 22, 37 couture brands showcased their fall 2025 collections for Tokyo Fashion Week, sponsored by Japanese technology company Rakuten. It took place in the Shibuya neighborhood of Tokyo, a major hub for fashion and business alike. Many collections opted for experimental business attire; others chose edgy streetwear as their outlet. But of these 37 runways, four exceptional collections stood out as the stars of the week.

Furumau

Originally operating under the name Chono, founder and head designer Wataru Nakazono formed Furumau last year to emphasize the freedom of fashion — the name is based on the Japanese word "furuimau," which means "to flutter." In this collection, Nakazono succeeds in evoking a sense of melancholic springtime, with muted grays dancing alongside rich leafy greens, rosy pinks and foggy blues. These color combinations make one feel like they're searching through a hazy afternoon mist or a field after a storm. Nakazono's collection is eclectic and approachable at the same time, maintaining a sense of wearability that many runways neglect in their experimentation.

One of my favorite looks involved a gray-and-purple tartan pattern and a black puffy collar. The tartan has almost a cyberpunk flair here (an impressive feat for a pattern found on the antique blankets at your grandmother's house), and yet it succeeds in being an item you could feasibly wear in your day-to-day life. Furumau injects personality into its business attire, creating playful pantsuits with polka dots and quilted stripes. Its long floral dresses — a combination of mesh and opaque materials — are another highlight. All of these factors result in a collection that provides a unique pop to a professional wardrobe.

Keiko Nishiyama

Designer Keiko Nishiyama's collection "Reminiscence," which she has dedicated to her father Hiroshi Nishiyama, is based on the concept of curiosity. Since the label is based in both Tokyo and London, it fittingly combines influences from both — Japanese kimonos decorated with English "Alice in Wonderland" inspired designs woven in gold. Nishiyama's clothes feature her own handmade prints depicting fictional flowers and animals that instill a feeling of fantastical wonder that is rooted in the natural world. The prints themselves, upon first glance, appear to be real species, but are surreal enough in their watercolor haze and uncanny nature to pique your interest.

In seas of deep purples and rich pinks, Nishiyami combines bulky durability with passive tranquility in three main phases of the collection.

CONTINUED AT MICHIGANDAILY.COM

'Mad Men' was never about Don Draper

JACK CONNOLLY
Daily Arts Contributor

"Mad Men" protagonist Don Draper (Jon Hamm, "Landman") appears to be the single coolest guy ever: creative, handsome and seductive. He's who all women want and all men want to be. He's the James Bond of 1960s New York. But his entire identity is a lie. Don Draper was born Dick Whitman to a sex worker in rural Illinois. After an explosion during his service in the Korean War, Dick took the dog tags of his commanding officer, the real Donald Draper (Troy Ruptash, "General Hospital"), and assumed his identity.

I've never loved this plotline of "Mad Men." Don's backstory — his early childhood, young life and eventual identity change — felt less interesting than any of Don's relationships at the advertising agency Sterling Cooper (or any of the other relationships on the show, for that matter). I loved "Mad Men" for its sense of character, time and place and its exceptionally written relationships. "Mad Men" understood that for TV to be great in the canonical sense, it must be good in the traditional sense first.

In a show full of great characters and sharp writing, Don's identity switch feels clumsy. Other characters have demons — Roger Sterling (John Slattery, "Desperate Housewives") is an alcoholic adulterer, and Pete Campbell (Vincent Kartheiser, "Titans") is an insecure jerk — but the show manages to tell those stories without resorting to angsty childhood flashbacks. Yet whenever I say this to people, I get eyerolls. "That is the show, that's what it's about," they will inevitably say to me. This thinking has tainted my views on "Mad Men," one of my favorite shows. If these people are right (and given the amount of time the Dick Whitman plot is granted in the show, they just might be), then do I love one of my favorite shows in spite of itself? Do I love it for the breezy and gossipy window dressing around its weighty, Great American Novel-esque premise? Am I watching "Mad Men" wrong?

Thinking about this, I was reminded of "The Sopranos" showrunner David Chase's distaste for those who thoughtlessly viewed his show as a collection of ironic one-liners rather than a defining piece of art about early 21st-century American life. Was I the "Mad Men" equivalent of one of those morons who thought "The Sopranos" was about gabagool and sex workers? I drank an old-fashioned and smoked a Lucky Strike after finishing "Mad Men." Am I a moron? Does "Mad Men" showrunner Matthew Weiner hate me? I hope not.

While I can't speak to whether Matthew Weiner hates me (I've never corresponded with him, so I'd be kind of honored if he did), "Mad Men" is not split between its good (as in fun) and great (as in self-important) qualities the way I used to think it was. Its breezy, gossipy fun is not separate from its ambition. Although "Mad Men" contains the Dick Whitman plotline, the show is not just about Dick Whitman. Rather, Dick Whitman embodies the show's central theme: reinvention. To what extent can anything — a man, a television show or a country — become new again? "Mad Men" is obsessed with this concept, and it's what makes the series not only a rich text about identity and the very nature of being, but a thrilling, fresh and exciting show.

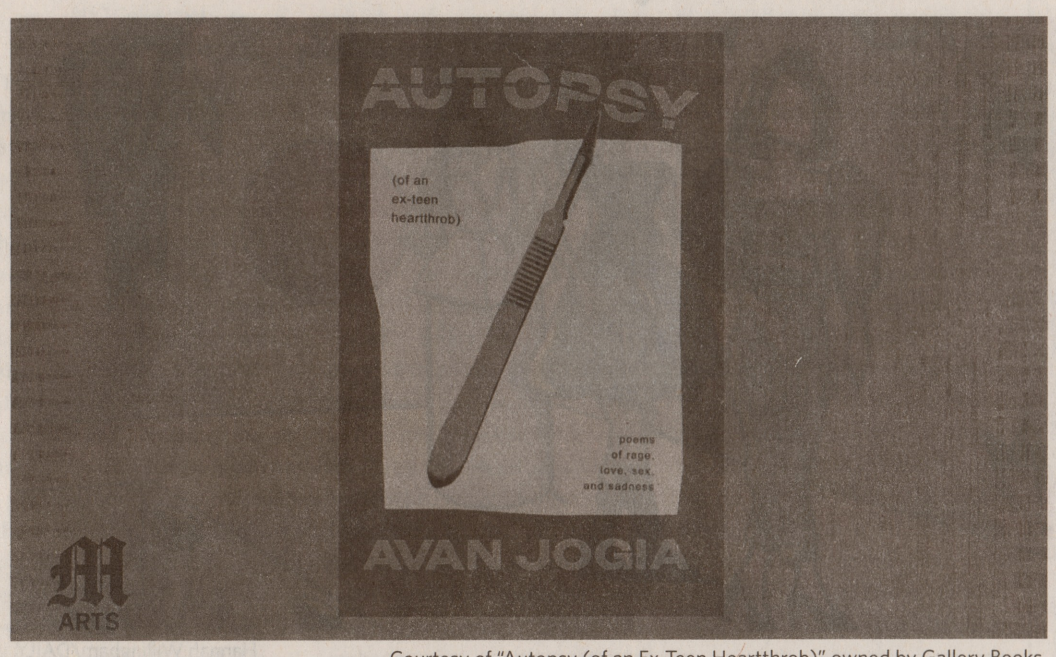
In its plot, "Mad Men" seems to be about creativity — about invention. In the pilot, Don has a creative breakthrough in the middle of a meeting with the tobacco executives at Lucky Strike, who are anxious because the Surgeon General has just outlawed advertising that smoking is healthy. As the suits are about to leave, Don gets up and says "This is the greatest advertising opportunity since the invention of cereal. We have six identical companies making six identical products. We can say anything we want." He pitches a new slogan for Lucky Strike — "It's Toasted" — and the men eat it up. He presents it as a creative revelation, but inherently it's not. What Don has done is change the playing field. He has seen what others cannot. He hasn't invented a new product, but he has reshaped the way the world sees it. His breakthrough is not the creation of a consumable, but a brilliant act of reinvention.

Reinvention is not just a motif of the plot. "Mad Men" works for a variety of reasons, but none more than for its willingness to reinvent itself. As great as TV is at tracking characters' lives over time, many shows eventually become complacent, sticking with the same cast of characters and finding little new to say. "Mad Men" was radically unwilling to be complacent. No arc makes this more glaringly apparent than the mutiny from advertising agency Sterling Cooper. The Sterling Cooper partners realize that the company is being bought out, and that their entire careers are at risk.

Don, Bert Cooper (Robert Morse, "The People vs. OJ Simpson: American Crime Story"), Roger Sterling and Lane Pryce (Jared Harris, "Foundation") vote in Don's office to secede and form a new agency — and they do. The agency gets a new name and office, and the show gets a whole new life.

CONTINUED AT MICHIGANDAILY.COM

Avan Jogia's 'Autopsy' doesn't reveal all that much



Courtesy of "Autopsy (of an Ex-Teen Heartthrob)" owned by Gallery Books.

ARCHISHA PATHAK
Daily Arts Writer

Young and new to the Los Angeles landscape, Avan Jogia was thrust into the spotlight upon his debut performance in Nickelodeon's "Victorious." The show's pilot episode, which aired in 2010, attracted an audience of millions, accumulating even more fans over the course of its four seasons. Avan Jogia has since had various roles in film and television in addition to also being widely known for his social media presence. The release of his book, "Autopsy (of an Ex-Teen Heartthrob)," is meant to be an artistic rendition of its namesake, dissecting the life of "an ex-teen heartthrob" and his progression through his career — namely, the behind-the-screen parts of his life that go unnoticed by an audience. The book begins with a few short pages of prose detailing the start of his career and his mother's simultaneous diagnosis with ovarian cancer. Though it's built as a memoir of sorts, "Autopsy" is made up of pages upon pages of poetry focusing on themes of fame, sex and mental health.

While primarily composed of poems, the book also includes scattered pieces of prose, though these are few and far between. The first poem promises an introspective look at Avan Jogia's life in Hollywood, and the separate prose sections discuss how, as a teenager, he was forced to experience independence in Los Angeles after his mother went back to Canada to receive cancer treatment. In all of the novel's prose sections, Jogia's writing is raw, replete with dry wit and sardonic humor that instantly captures the reader's attention. There is true poetry in his story, in describing the isolation that comes with the fame of a child actor and the hardship of navigating Hollywood while coping with a parent's cancer diagnosis.

Yet despite its promising start, the rest of Jogia's writing fakes its depth and fails to live up to the name of the collection, only grazing the surface of the issues it claims to address while revealing little about Jogia himself. Jogia's vague and contrived descriptions of fame and "coming of age" focus on his experiences on set or the unhealthy relationships people often form with celebrities, delivered in the form of "wisdom." It screams to prove its poignancy, to insist that it is profound. The unfortunate product is a series of cliché-adjacent phrases and notes-app style poetry that could have been meaningful, if only it hadn't been chopped into a few lines for the allure of being mysterious.

Insulting the intelligence of the reader, Jogia spoon-feeds us the most fundamental themes, from "I know what it feels like to be used" to "ego is a sickness." Poetry should evoke thinking, using figurative language or symbolism to set a rhythm to the writing and leave the reader with questions.

CONTINUED AT MICHIGANDAILY.COM

SXSW 2025: Inside 'The Last of Us' season two

MORGAN SIERADSKI
TV Beat Editor

During the South by Southwest Film & TV Festival, the cast and creators of "The Last of Us" sat down to talk about the show's highly anticipated second season. Panelists included co-creators Neil Druckmann and Craig Mazin, returning cast members Pedro Pascal ("The Mandalorian"), Bella Ramsey ("His Dark Materials") and Gabriel Luna ("Agents of S.H.E.I.L.D"), and new additions Kaitlyn Dever ("Apple Cider Vinegar"), Isabela Merced ("Maya and the Three") and Young Mazino ("Beef").

The panel kicked off with the official season two trailer, showing snippets of what viewers can expect from the series' upcoming installment. In the trailer, we are treated to new characters, new locations and new infected.

While the first season focused on Joel and Ellie's journey, season two sees the pair settled in Jackson, Wyo., having formed a community with other survivors. Druckmann and Mazin touched on the primary themes of season two, with Druckmann mentioning tribalism and dehumanization as major plot points. It seems the citizens of Jackson are in conflict with other factions of survivors, leading to the lines between human and monster becoming increasingly blurry. Mazin stated that the show has always investigated "the cost of love" and discussed how communities are maintained or destroyed. The trailer teases shifting dynamics within Jackson, including between Joel and Ellie. This guarantees plenty of tension, as Joel and Ellie's five years in Jackson appear to have changed them both.

When asked about the differences from the games to the show, Druckmann and Mazin noted that season two will include several important deviations from their source material. Viewers get to see Joel going to therapy, a well-deserved break for someone constantly fighting infected. Druckmann spoke about his excitement watching these scenes come together, as Joel's character will be explored in greater emotional depth. Eugene (Joe Pantoliano, "The Sopranos"), a character mentioned but never explicitly shown in the games, will also make an appearance this season. Mazin said they "try as much as (they) can to reward people who have played the game." With Eugene's character in particular, he emphasized the importance of using existing characters to fill new narrative roles, connecting back to the established world.

The cast spoke extensively about the shifting dynamics of their characters, from changes in established relationships to introducing new ones. Merced, who plays Dina, Ellie's love interest, spoke about her chemistry with Ramsey, saying "it was not hard to act like (she) was falling in love." The pair shared a sweet moment complementing one another on stage, and it was clear to see the respect and admiration the cast had for each other.

Dever discussed her nervousness stepping into the role of Abby, another major player in the second game. She worked closely with Druckmann and Mazin to develop Abby's character, balancing game expectations with the show interpretation. She said she wanted to focus on "who Abby is at her core" and center her emotional journey in the story. The incredible acting and characterization are some of the main factors that made season one shine, so hearing the actors be so passionate and excited to work with one another bodes well for season two.

If fans are hoping for more action in season two, Druckmann and Mazin promise to deliver. Druckmann said they "swung for the fences" this season, between attacks from the infected and other survivors. Mazin agreed, promising a broader story with many more lenses to look through. "If we don't get canceled," said Mazin, "next season will be even bigger."

Speaking of infected, Druckmann and Mazin confirmed that Stalkers, a fan-favorite (or least favorite) enemy in the games, will appear in season two. They also confirmed the presence of spores, an airborne method of spreading the Cordyceps infection. With the escalating tensions in Jackson, the inclusion of these game components adds an extra layer of horror. It looks like Druckmann and Mazin are making good on their promise: Season two is shaping up to be a lot bigger.

Fans of the show and the games should be excited for "The Last of Us" season two, with the addition of both familiar and unfamiliar elements to keep viewers on their toes. I'm excited to see the direction this season takes in weaving together its various plot lines. When season two premieres on April 13, my eyes will be glued to the TV.

The luminous journey of 'All We Imagine as Light'

ABIGAIL WEINBERG
Daily Arts Contributor

How do we decide where home is? Is home the place we go to find work, to find shelter, to find love? Or is it where we go when we give up on all three?

The illusions of home, the illusions of womanhood and the illusions of love are all questioned in "All We Imagine as Light." The film takes place in Mumbai, the urban jungle which director Payal Kapadia sets as her basis for exploring how these topics intersect with life in the city. Mumbai is an urban landscape of possibilities. The opportunities the city provides are simply not replicated in any rural parts of India. Women there must decide whether they will remain in their rural villages, isolated from a greater portion of society, or seek something greater. But what this greatness provides often feels like an illusion.

This tender story of womanhood is on full display in "All We Imagine as Light," which follows the lives of three nurses living in Mumbai. The technical elements of the film automatically set the tone for the story. Cinematographer Ranabir Das, who has worked with Kapadia before on "A Night of Knowing Nothing," worked around the movie's low budget by producing digital camera work that resembles that of 35mm film. In the opening sequence, Kapadia presents documentary footage of Mumbai that is voiced over by actual citizens in order to introduce the immigrant experience in the city. Das adds a grainy texture, highlighting the gritty urban setting that challenges the lives of its citizens and which will become the setting for the characters of this story.

The film primarily follows Prabha (Kani Kusruti, "Biriyaani"), a nurse who has found herself living with her younger counterpart, Anu (Divya Prabha, "Declaration"). Prabha and Anu are coworkers at a nearby hospital where Anu works as a receptionist. Prabha finds herself sorrowfully drifting through life, while Anu has high hopes for her future and works to craft her own destiny separate from her family's traditional view of arranged marriage. In contrast, Prabha had an arranged marriage but has since been abandoned by her husband, who now works in Germany and no longer contacts her.

Throughout the film, Kapadia contrasts Prabha and Anu's different perspectives on love. While Prabha quietly grieves the loss of the love she desired, Anu actively pursues a taboo relationship with a Muslim boy (Hridhu Haroon, "Mura"), which, we come to learn, is why she has chosen to move in with Prabha — to avoid her family's disdain. Yet, despite her troubles with it herself, Prabha is still a proponent of arranged marriage — for reasons of practicality, though, not tradition. For Prabha, she must believe that her husband will return; otherwise, where would she go from here? Kapadia explores these two different dynamics, contrasting the progression of younger generations with the traditions that are ingrained in Indian culture.

Despite their differences, Anu and Prabha have an at once heartwarming and heartbreaking sister-like relationship. Eventually, this connection leads to conflict when Prabha's anger is misdirected during a sporadic outburst during which she shames Anu and calls her a "slut." She describes arranged marriage as a fate Anu cannot escape, much like the failing relationship Prabha herself is trapped within. This does not deter Anu, however, as she continues to see her boyfriend, Shiaz, in secret and searches for locations to progress their intimacy. Anu and Shiaz's relationship is pure — as young love often is — and while Anu pursues an authentic, tangible romance, Prabha clings to scraps of her own marriage, grieving the love she never experienced. When Prabha receives an ominous rice cooker in the mail with no indication of a sender, she latches onto it, imagining that it is a gift from her husband. Holding onto the rice cooker, Prabha sits on the floor, hugging the machine, juxtaposing her desire for romance with her lonely urban reality.

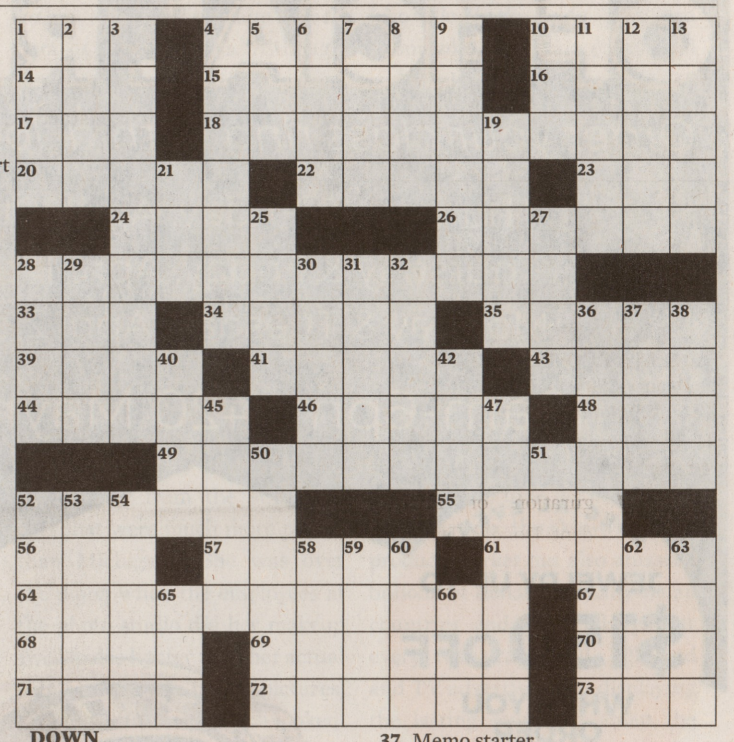
Beyond the sisterly dynamic of "All We Imagine as Light," Mumbai's urban setting also emphasizes the events of the film. In particular, the concept of a home is questioned by the reality of life in Mumbai. The first words of the film, from the stream of Mumbai immigrant voice-overs, articulates: "I've lived here 25 years, but I feel afraid to call it home." Kapadia crafts an anxious, overwhelming view of the city that clearly relates to the sentiment of displacement Prabha and Anu, as fellow immigrants from small villages, also feel.

Prabha and Anu's idea of home complicates when their coworker, Parvaty (Chhaya Kadam, "Lost Ladies"), is evicted for the construction of an apartment complex. Parvaty takes this news without a fight, immediately deciding to move back to her home village. This leads all three women to question the concept of home that they have tried to create in Mumbai. The city has revealed the harsh truth that a house is just property that can easily be taken away by higher powers.

CONTINUED AT MICHIGANDAILY.COM

The Michigan Daily Crossword

Sunday, April 13, 2025 — Puzzle by Regina Duerst



ACROSS

1. Lao-tzu's "way"
4. Exploratory spacecraft
10. Exploratory spacecraft
14. Lou Gehrig's disease, for short
15. High-flying sharpshooter
16. Length x width, for a rectangle
17. Drunkard
18. Pair who went "up a hill"
20. Divided Asian peninsula
22. Correo ___ (Spanish airmail)
23. Cavs, on a scoreboard
24. Michigan city or college
26. Medicinal hemp product
28. Treetop dweller easily affected by wind
33. Prefix for a lifesaving "Pen"
34. Material for Elvis' blue shoes
35. Mythical Himalayan creatures
39. Work well together
41. Sabrina Carpenter 2024 hit
43. "Auld Lang ___"
44. Seems cross
46. Save for later
48. ___game before going out, colloquially
49. Shepherdess who can't find her sheep
52. Dick Cheney's predecessor
55. Ride the waves
56. God, in Italy
57. Lawn surface
61. Exterminator's target
64. Fabled matriarch, or a book containing 18-, 28-, and 49-Across
67. U-M school focused on STEM
68. Paramore hit, "Still ___ You"
69. Soccer player Vidal
70. Right-angle shape
71. Old Russian ruler
72. "Lord of the Rings" antagonist
73. Virtual person in a computer game

DOWN

1. To-do list item
2. Potatoes, in Indian cuisine
3. Exclusion from social events
4. Slumber party attire
5. Narrow coastal inlet
6. Killer whale
7. Use the oven
8.
9. ___ Falls, "Birthplace of Women's Rights"
10. ___ Mahal
11. Kim Barnes ___, U-M women's basketball head coach
12. String section instruments
13. Superman's birth name
19. House elf freed with a sock
21. Antlered animal
25. Share a border with
27. Yellow 5, Red 40 and Blue 2
28. Notes after do
29. Midwest interjections
30. Dough raiser
31. '50s Ford flop
32. Midler of film, music and more
36. Font families
37. Memo starter
38. Trickle (through)
40. Angelic ring
42. ___ and flows
45. Sad song
47. "I'll take that bet!"
50. Earths, in sci-fi
51. Whiz
52. Own up (to)
53. Detroit NFL team
54. Must, informally
58. 10-down's city
59. Annual presidential speech, briefly
60. Tart-tasting
62. E. follower
63. Captain's place
65. Opposite of vert.
66. "No seats" sign

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COVID killed Cupid

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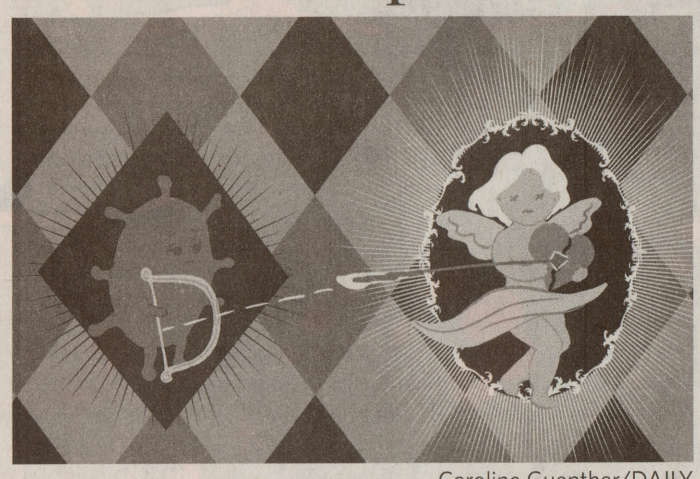


Caroline Guenther/DAILY

This year marks the first time that "Galentine's" Day wasn't my only plan for Feb. 14. Although it was nice to share the holiday with someone romantically, I was more excited to finally be a wing woman, rather than need one myself.

After seeing my friends crash and burn with their romantic prospects time and time again, I noticed two things. First, regardless of relationship status, Valentine's Day will forever be overrated. Second, it wasn't their fault: They were doomed from the start.

My friends weren't striking out because of cliche pickup lines or missed social cues — it was because the entire social dynamic has shifted since the COVID-19 pandemic. Dating and mingling, which used to be second nature, now feel forced, clumsy and honestly kind of painful to watch. Undeniably, there is something larger at play. The problem: People don't know how to interact after isolation.

They say love conquers all, but did it survive social distancing?

Studies have shown that face-to-face communication is vital for an individual's well-being, something that virtual reality is unable to replace. The key ingredients of communication go beyond just verbal discourse: physical connection is also important. Physical presence brings another layer of communication that goes beyond words. Body language, eye contact and facial expressions are subtle cues that help people pick up on emotion — something that can easily get lost in texts or on screens.

Even face-to-face virtual interactions like video calls can disrupt natural cues. The lack of shared physical space, especially when first getting to know a person or at the start of a new relationship, makes interactions feel less authentic and impersonal. In-person interactions allow people to better understand each other, ultimately resulting in more trusting relationships.

In a post-pandemic society, not only did we forget how to interact with one another, but we forgot how to flirt, too.

After almost a full year of living in our comfort zones — literally and figuratively — we've grown accustomed to the safety of our screens and the warmth of our couches. Many question how interpersonal awareness has changed since in-person communication was at a standstill.

CONTINUED AT MICHIGANDAILY.COM

Where is the moral courage in the decision to eliminate DEI at UMich?

KEVIN COKLEY
Opinion Contributor

With the recent decision to end diversity, equity and inclusion, the University of Michigan destroyed the sterling reputation it built for itself over years as higher education's exemplar of diversity, equity and inclusion in the blink of an eye. When I left the University of Texas at Austin in 2022 to come to the University as a professor of psychology, I was ecstatic about coming to a university that infused the core values of DEI throughout the campus. Indeed, DEI was such an integral part of U-M culture that I believed I was now in a place where I did not have to worry about the University's unequivocal commitment to what they claimed were part of its core values.

I proudly (and naively) believed that I had left a politically hostile climate behind. After all, it was the University under the principled leadership of James Duderstadt and Lee Bollinger that defended affirmative action all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. However, in less than three years, the University administration has completely abandoned its values and capitulated to the University's Board of Regents and the authoritarian regime of President Donald Trump's administration.

There appears to have been no resistance by the administration to the factually inaccurate criticisms of DEI by the regents, resulting in a pivot on the University's supposed core values. Perhaps my understanding of values differs from the administration's. Values are what people or institutions believe are fundamentally right or wrong and what are most important in life. Institutional core values are not supposed to be easily changeable, and if University leadership is so quick to abandon its core values of DEI, one may wonder if they were ever really core values to begin with.

I'm reminded of the proverb, "When the going gets tough, the tough get going." This proverb means that in difficult times, individuals with strong character are even more determined to succeed. As the University and higher education at large are being threatened with, what are likely, unconstitutional executive orders, it is more important than ever to have leaders who defend the University's core values rather than acquiesce.

Fortunately, there are examples of strong, principled leadership in higher education. When regents at UT Austin attempted to implement "Seven Breakthrough Solutions" for restructuring the university, many thought they were inimical to its research mission. Former UT Austin President William Powers Jr. challenged these "solutions" and was a vocal supporter of the traditional role and centrality of academic research, making him a political target.

Similarly, Rob Odom, vice president of university relations and marketing at Oregon State University, sent a message to OSU community members reaffirming the university's commitment to DEI programs and inclusive excellence. Wesleyan University President Michael Roth wrote a powerful op-ed in Slate arguing "college presidents should weigh in when they see the missions of their institutions ... compromised." Roth stands out for not being afraid to criticize Trump's decisions and strongly defending DEI, immigration and transgender rights. While the leadership at the University disappoints us, one notable exception is Dean Carlos Jackson who recently sent an exceptionally powerful statement to the Stamps School of Art & Design community. In the statement, he criticized the rationale for cutting the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and reaffirming their support for DEI efforts as being legal and ethical. Unfortunately, this statement has now been deleted and a new message issued to comply with the University leadership.

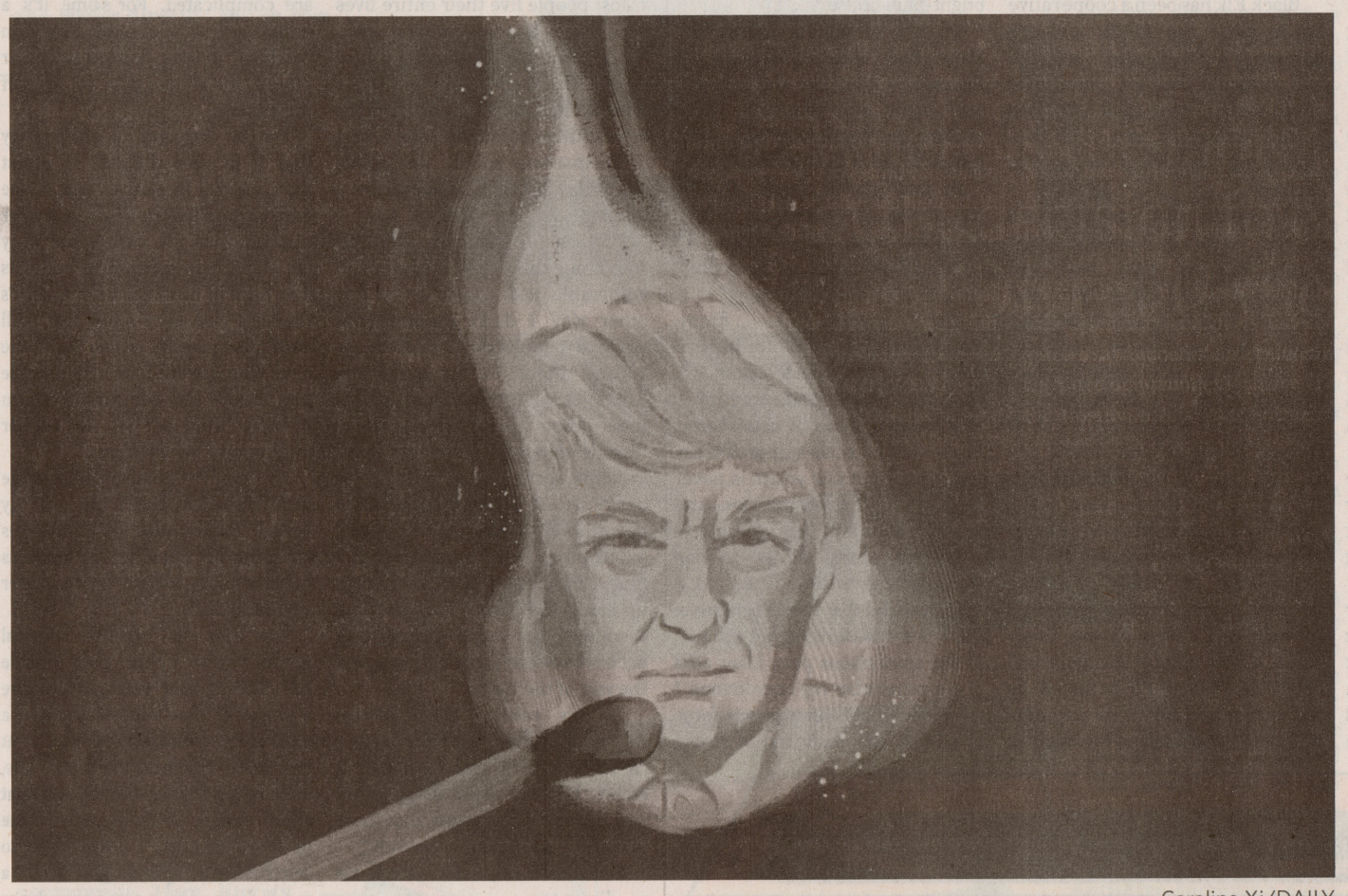
To be sure, the administration should be very concerned about the threats to withhold federal funding for alleged "illegal DEI." Withholding federal funding negatively impacts research and development (e.g., halting critical projects that impact the lives of people), financial stability (which can lead to hiring freezes, layoffs or cuts to programs and services) and student support (e.g., Pell Grants) that can make education less affordable. However, given that the University has shared governance in theory, a more appropriate approach would have been to seek faculty input and guidance on how to address the threats while maintaining a commitment to all of the University's core values.

Martin Luther King Jr. once addressed the moral courage that one needs to stand up for what is right. He said, "Cowardice asks the question — is it safe? Expediency asks the question — is it politic? Vanity asks the question — is it popular? But conscience asks the question — is it right? There comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular, but one must take it because one's conscience tells one that it is right."

While I recognize this phrase, like other King phrases, can be co-opted and used in a way that is very different from its original meaning, it strikes at the heart of what has happened at the University. Where is the moral courage in the decision to eliminate DEI? History will not be kind to those who knew what the right thing was but failed to do it.

Stoking the fire or lighting the spark: Is Trump unprecedented?

ZACHARY AJLUNI & MATEO ALVAREZ
Deputy Editorial Page Editor & Opinion Columnist



Caroline Xi/DAILY

With the second inauguration of President Donald Trump, Americans — whether they support him or not — continue to debate the extremity of his actions. To some, the president's agenda is just an extension of regular executive overreach. To others, this is an unprecedented abuse of presidential power. Deputy Editorial Page Editor Zach Ajluni and Opinion Columnist Mateo Alvarez argue each side of this contemporary debate.

Mateo Alvarez:

Of the thousands of words that I have heard used to describe the second Trump administration, few elicit as dramatic an eye roll quite like the term "unprecedented." From his plans to deport millions of illegal immigrants to his talks about annexing Canada as the next U.S. state, any sort of policy or action taken by the new administration has been branded with the same five syllable word. The only issue is: That it is just not true.

The Trump administration's recent dismissal of court rulings and the president's deliberate attempts to ignore century's old customs has sowed plenty of fear among the American public, with many proclaiming — after countless "false alarms" — that America's democratic norms are finally facing their expiration date. However, with almost 250 years of an executive branch hungry for growth, many of Trump's illegal and unconstitutional actions have happened before. The notion that democracy is ending and that "this time's for real" is a classic case of chronocentrism: The uniquely human assumption that the present is always going to be different.

In the present, things always feel "unprecedented." There is a morbid excitement in the idea that the unfathomable is happening now, that the ending which has been prophesied for hundreds of years is getting fulfilled and that we all stand as witnesses to it. The truth is, however, that for decades the executive has been an elected autocrat, waging war and enforcing law while the Supreme Court and Congress swing by to occasionally slap him on the wrist.

The only common denominator one could apply to every man to grace the Oval Office is the unrelenting pursuit of power. The only thing that makes Trump stand out among the rest is that — as an act of either ignorance or brilliance — the 45th and 47th president has made all of his power grabs in the purview of the public. There is no "Trojan Horse," no war to justify his propaganda and no crisis to merit expansion. Instead, Trump and his administration are satiating their want for power by simply taking it, leaving every president that preceded him to presumably sit and wonder: "Why didn't I think of that?"

The fact of the matter is that from former President Franklin Roosevelt's detention camps, to former President Barack Obama's use of executive orders to overstep Congress, Trump is no trailblazer. He is not the first president to sponsor propaganda, nor is he the first to preside over a government that is kidnapping its own residents. Trump is not a perversion to the presidency. Instead, his policy changes have been a distillation of what has long been one of the president's fundamental objectives: the acquisition of power. If Donald Trump's actions constitute the "end of democracy," then democracy in the United States ended hundreds of years ago.

The Oval Office has continuously been one marked by power grabs and expansion to the point where it is essentially unrecognizable when compared to its constitutional framework. Call it cautious optimism or blind ignorance, but democracy will persevere past Trump. If anything truly makes him stand out, it is that he's the first one to show the country what the executive has always been.

Zach Ajluni:

The idea that one man could be such a potent threat to American democracy can seem rather hyperbolic. After all, the United States has survived some intense economic, political and social hardships, often coming out stronger than before. Yet, Trump's unique capture of the Republican Party coupled with his blatantly anti-democratic actions set the stage for what has undoubtedly been an unprecedented attack on the very ideals America was built on.

While there have certainly been contentious elections in the nation's near 250-year history, Trump's concerted efforts to illegally overturn the 2020 election rise above the rest and cement his reputation as distinctly anti-American. The nationwide campaign, led by the president and fully supported by the GOP, to sow doubt in the U.S. electoral system underscores his disregard of a core tenet of democracy: free and fair elections. His incitement of the Jan. 6 armed attack on the U.S. Capitol was something not even the Confederates tried during the American Civil War.

Gone are the days of the other two branches of government successfully reining in the executive. With Trump's total control of the Republican Party and the conservative corruption in the Supreme Court, the president seems to be functioning on a very long leash. Republicans in Congress turn a blind eye to Trump's high crimes, and the Supreme Court has let him off easy, granting broad criminal immunity from official acts as president. This freedom from institutional guardrails has allowed the executive to be more unhinged than ever.

CONTINUED AT MICHIGANDAILY.COM

THE STATEMENT

Illustrations and design by Maisie Derlega

Graduation blues: Will I end up abandoning my dreams?

AMANDA VENCLOVAITE-PIRANI
Statement Correspondant

When I tell anyone on the University of Michigan's campus I'm 23, they often react as if I'm dying.

There's an *"Oh. Damn."* Followed by a hushed, mournful tone when they realize it will someday happen to them too.

The reaction has prompted a strange sense of urgency that, if I am dying, I'd better get to figuring out what I will do with my wild and precious life before I get to the end.

As a teenager, life felt like holding a 64-pack of crayola crayons and realizing I had all the time in the world to color. I'd add a little carnation pink here, sea green there. Maybe tomorrow, I'd finally try indigo. These days, I can feel the pack dwindling down and, with it, the push toward practicality becoming more pressing. Cornflower feels risky all of a sudden and I lost burnt sienna at some point when I was 18. Maybe I should plan more, arrange each color in just the right order before I pick one. I should count them, in an effort to avoid losing them all.

Recently, in a class, my professor had us watch a TED Talk about procrastination. The speaker put this picture up on a projector, with a bunch of empty squares. He said each square represented a month of an 80+year-long life. I thought, *"there's not enough squares."* I also thought, *"some of us won't even have that many."*

I am aware that this feeling is dramatic and that anyone older than me will insist that 23 is as youthful and relevant as any age before it. Despite this, I find myself staring at the message scrawled on the wall near my kitchen door with growing concern: *"Remember your convictions to change the world, and carry that spirit with you always."*

Black Elk has been a cooperative house since the 1980s, and it's known as a house where activists and students that are passionate about social justice (and annoying vegans, though I'd have to dispute this rumor) have lived throughout the years.

My home, like many co-ops in Ann Arbor, is covered in the fingerprints of past residents: photographs, old event flyers and artwork. There's anarchist posters, spooky wax sculptures, paintings of the ocean and more bumper stickers than I've been able to count slapped on cabinets, window frames, furniture and doors. My favorite part of these mementos, though, is the handwritten notes you'll find tucked into odd corners of a room or on bedroom doors.

Brushing my teeth or doing laundry, I find myself searching for them as if it were a game. Every week, a new cursive message will catch my eye and I'll be struck by the realization that, one day, this will be all that's left of the current version of myself. For future students and generations of youth, I'll be the nugget of wisdom or a drunkenly conjured knock-knock joke on a bathroom wall.

Black Elk is also full of old journals, kept by the house members living there each year. When I first moved in, I spent hours pouring over the stories of students from decades past. I feel a strange connection with these people who also once made the choice to live in this lovely, strange, bright-blue house.

There's something compelling about the college versions of themselves that live on in these wall notes and journals. These students are passionate and, often, just as afraid of the future as I am.

In one journal from 2004, a girl writes, "I will die a lonely, childless, cold, old woman. All because I didn't get an internship. Sometimes it seems that way."

The quote is funny, melodramatic and full of hurt in a way that, two decades later, still feels relatable as a student applying to jobs with a liberal arts degree. Black Elk's journals and graffiti are reminders that our youth is never as long or vast as we imagine. And yet, it's often still enough time to completely transform the person we are when we leave here.

I am afraid that when I graduate and leave this University, I will not, as the anonymous past Elker asks of me, remember my convictions. I am afraid of this amorphous force of adulthood, made up of stress, finances, loneliness and pain that I have come to call practicality.

While I realized at a young age that I didn't have the desire to pursue the visual arts professionally, I've always considered myself an artist. We have this tendency in the United States to associate who we are with our profession. I've come to realize that to be an artist is more about a way of being than a talent.

In her book "How Should a Person Be?," Sheila Heti writes, "Most people live their entire lives with their clothes on, and even if they wanted to, couldn't take them off. Then there are those who cannot put them on. ... They are destined to expose every part of themselves, so the rest of us can know what it means to be a human."

I imagine that an artist is something like this, strange and vulnerable and unable to be any other way. I don't mean to put creative people on a pedestal — I think there are far too many examples of artists who, despite their great work, did too many terrible things for us to put them in some sort of morally superior position (but aren't artists meant to be tortured?). I only mean to reflect, based on my own experience and that of others that I've picked up along the way, on the natural, seemingly inevitable grating that occurs between artistic people and the rest of the world.

In his essay "The Creative Process," James Baldwin writes, "A society must assume that it is stable, but the artist must know, and he must let us know, that there is nothing stable under heaven."

For Baldwin, the artist is a disruptor — someone who questions and reveals, someone who attempts at every turn to make the world "a more human dwelling place." He describes the state of the artist as a duty that requires a commitment to risk.

I see this notion in my relationship with my mother and our struggles to connect. My mother is a numbers lady; she is practical to her core. Her favorite color is brown and she wanted nothing more than for me to become an accountant. I, on the other hand, am decidedly not practical. I write reminders on my hands in Sharpie and will bleach my hair on a whim. I write poems on bubble gum wrappers and paint people in strange colors.

The love between my mother and me is a constant matter of trying. This is how I love the world too. I imagine this is how it is for the world to reluctantly love me as well.

I am often told, whether it be in response to my ideals or dreams, that I will change my mind when I am older. And the truth is, I might. I don't welcome this, but I acknowledge that, for most of us, this life is long and difficult. The reasons young professionals eventually choose to "sell out" are complicated. For some, it's a temporary choice until they can "make it" in their desired field. For others, it's a necessity to pay off their loans.

I'm no stranger to the reality that it is very difficult to resist the financial incentives that come with certain jobs or fields, however unglamorous the experience may be. Many first-generation students also have to consider their family's finances and earn a job that will help their parents retire. For those of us who hope to have a family one day, there's also the consideration of what kind of life our career might grant our children.

As I age, I've tried to make peace with the idea that I am not my career. Surrounded by ambitious students on track for prestigious careers in every field, this is easier said than done.

It's easy to become spiteful when you've spent your whole life hearing that your dreams are a waste of time or that you are a waste of potential. It's easy to want the flashy title and the flashy life, even when I know deep down that these things don't appeal to me or my strengths. I don't want to burn out after spending 60 hours a week drained by a company whose values don't align with my own. Or worse, so bitter and disillusioned by the job I thought would change the world but only turned out to be public service in the most superficial sense.

But the thought that I could graduate from college wanting to improve the world and find myself, 20 years from now, living a life I don't find meaningful or beneficial to the wider community is deeply concerning. I have to wonder if this change is really as inevitable as people make it out to be.

I think, though, that if I give this anxiety room to breathe, what I'm afraid of is bigger than a career choice.

There's a Henry David Thoreau quote taped above my bed. It's been there, and above all the bedrooms I've lived in since I was in high school. It's from the transcendentalist poetry I studied in high school, and it's now tattered and crumpled from being retaped over five different bedroom walls. It reads, "the mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation ... a stereotyped but unconscious despair is concealed even under what are called the games and amusements of mankind. There is no play in them, for this comes after work. But it is a characteristic of wisdom not to do desperate things."

If I'm being honest, I can't say I remembered what book this quote came from without Googling it. But, even at 16, I *felt* what Thoreau meant.

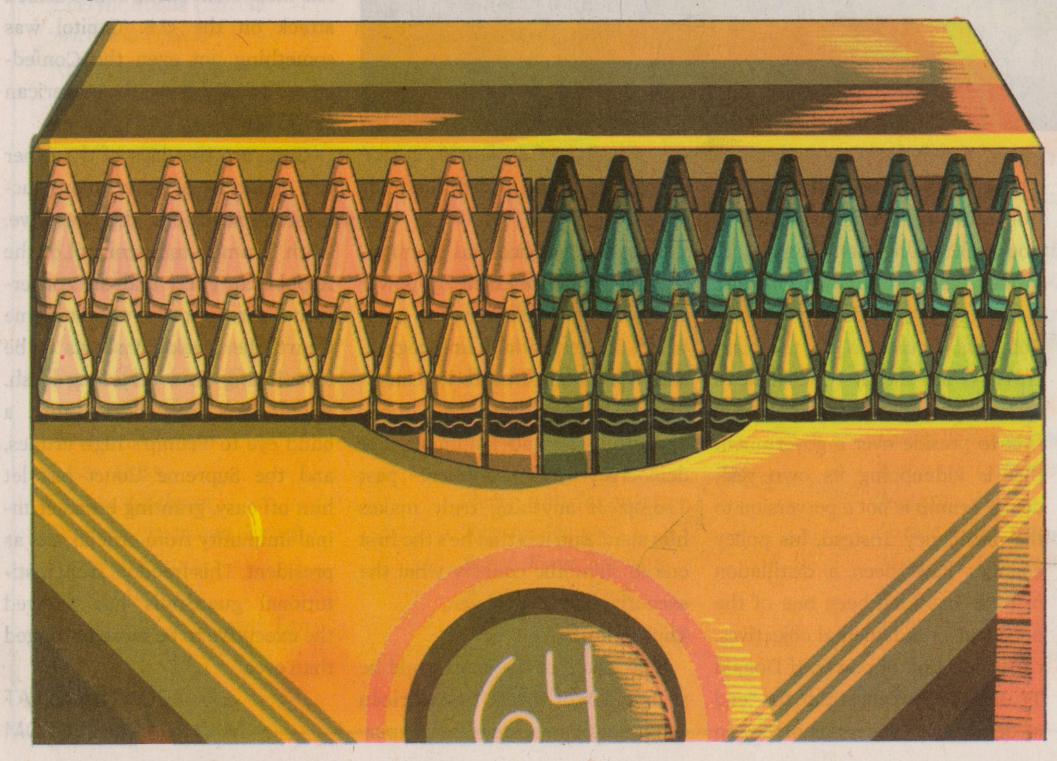
Now, I understand Thoreau's words to be about a commitment to internal exploration. Thoreau was somewhat of a hermit. He spent a lot of time living in the woods not far from where I grew up. What he meant by desperation, more than the death of dream careers, was the failure to fully explore one's own humanity and truly experience life.

I think what I am afraid of, more than what I end up doing, is *how* and *why* I do it. I am afraid of the quiet desperation, of passivity. I am afraid of waking up one day to find that I am married to someone who brings me no satisfaction or that I am alone because I could never find it in myself to commit to something. I am afraid that I'll wake up to find I never did keep up with that volunteering I thought was so valuable in college, that I'll be jaded and too tired to care about anything beyond daily life. I worry that, even now, I am living this way, blinded by my ambition and driven by the fear that, if I don't have it all figured out by 24, I'll have failed.

No matter how often I am told my ideologies will change, I find no other way to continue but to imagine that I have a choice in the matter. I choose to be absurdly hopeful that I will remain me, long after I leave this house.

I choose to imagine that, every day, I will feel drained and hurt and anxious and utterly exhausted. And yet, this will not stop me from caring about the world — from trying my hardest to do something good, however complicated and vulnerable that may be. Maybe I'll look different, maybe I'll have a family or maybe I won't. Maybe I'll find myself in a field I never expected I'd work in.

But I will always remember.



On keeping a college notebook

LUCY DEL DEO
Statement Contributor & Former Statement Deputy Editor

My most prized possession is probably one of my most beat-up, but I've never believed in saving the things you love. It's an olive-green Leuchtturm1917 with dotted note paper because I had a bullet journal for a few months in high school and realized I could never go back to line-ruled paper. The leather is frayed at the corners and it boasts four different addresses and two different phone numbers in its "return to sender" section.

I bought it in October of my freshman year at the University of Michigan from the Michigan Union bookstore because my high school journal just wasn't going to cut it for the new, sophisticated person I was becoming. The day I bought it, I spent all afternoon curled up in a booth by the windows in the Union basement, watching rain lash at the glass and frantically writing page after page until I had filled 15 creamy-white sheets with the glory that is a Paper Mate InkJoy gel pen. And then I didn't write in it again until April.

Or maybe I did, but I can't tell you for sure, because I ripped all of those pages out at some point and have since lost them in the chaos of paper that four years in college affords someone who can't bear to throw out old handouts and exams.

It's a little odd to look at this notebook and so clearly visualize its beginnings in my mind while staring at the binding peeking through — the way that, even now, pages threaten to flee. In my haste to remove those first 15 pages, I tore into the stitching and dislodged whole sections. I taped it back together with globe-patterned Washi Tape at one point, unwilling to let any other sheets make their escape.

Reading through this notebook is like being transported back into past scenes: Days spent lying on a picnic blanket in the Diag or perched in the Michigan League's garden fade into view as I play them back in my mind. I often had very little to say to my journal, but the lack of words doesn't diminish the vividness of the picture — for example, I can clearly remember the first warm day of sophomore year when my friends and I spread picnic blankets out on Ingalls Mall and shared a jar of fancy salsa from Zingerman's, but all I wrote down was "the ground is surprisingly cold."

Joan Didion, The Statement's resident muse and my favorite author, wrote an essay titled "On Keeping a Notebook," in which she explains why she felt the impulse to write things down as well as the difference between keeping a diary versus keeping a notebook. Keeping a diary, in her opinion, is the act of writing down one's daily actions, which she finds both benign and boring — a Didion death sentence.

Keeping a notebook, on the other hand, was something entirely different for Didion. She writes, "*How it felt to me:* that is getting closer to the truth about a notebook."

My notebook is a place where I can live a thousand lives — I can be a journalist, a poet, a fiction writer, perhaps even an artist, all within the span of a few pages. There's to-do lists and to-see lists and to-read lists, letters that I will never send and articles that I will never write. My notebook is the only place where I have felt truly free and 100% myself.

I guess that's why I'm so reluctant to lose any more of it; why I've taped it up and carried it around with me through seven different countries and written four different addresses on the inside of the front cover. I'm in there, all the different people that I've been in my four years at the University — the good, the bad, the messy and the mundane. To lose any more of them feels a bit like a death sentence of my own — how can I reliably know *how it felt to me* if I don't have it written down?

"We are well-advised to keep on nodding terms with the people we used to be, whether we find them attractive company or not," Didion wrote. "Otherwise they turn up unannounced and surprise us, come hammering on the mind's door at 4 a.m. of a bad night and demand to know who deserted them, who betrayed them, who is going to make amends."

My time at the University has been unparalleled in helping me understand who I am, what I value and what I want in life, but I would not be able to synthesize and apply that information without a record of who I have been. To know what I wanted and why I don't want it anymore, to feel it as vividly as I felt it then, keeps me from making the same mistakes that sophomore Lucy made, or even Lucy from six months ago. Keeping on nodding terms with the Lucys of U-M past lets me recognize how much I've grown in my four years here and also reminds me of how much growing I have left to do.

It's only as I've been re-visiting this notebook recently that I realized how much those jagged edges bothered me, because the Lucy that tore those pages out is not a Lucy that I can remember or connect with in the same way as the rest of them. Looking through old entries and seeing the quotes from the book I was reading, or something funny a friend said on our way to the farmer's market, I am able to transport myself back to those scenes. But I've lost the reason *why* I ripped those pages out to memory, and I've lost the pages themselves to time. Freshman year Lucy's thoughts and feelings are foreign to me now, despite so much of my time at the University being influenced by her decisions.

"It is a good idea, then, to keep in touch, and I suppose that keeping in touch is what notebooks are all about," Didion wrote. "And we are all on our own when it comes to keeping those lines open to ourselves: your notebook will never help me, nor mine you."

CONTINUED AT MICHIGANDAILY.COM

Should we graduate from creative nonfiction's formula?

OLIVIA KANE
Statement Contributor & Former Statement Summer Managing Editor

"Creative nonfiction writers be like: I first ate a hot dog when I was six years old. I remember the taste, the scent, the summer. SECTION BREAK. Hot dogs were invented in 1693 by Steven Hotdog. According to Scientific American, the hotdog is"

The post on X abruptly cuts off but the accusation is clear — creative nonfiction writers are shackled to a formula. A formula that loves the section break, self-aggrandizement and "niche" topics we assume readers are unfamiliar with. I've spent the greater part of a month thinking about whether this critique is reasonable. When I first read the post, I was filled with a desire to defend the genre to which I have devoted my college years. I've written pieces with sentences and topics that might easily be swapped for the hotdog anecdote and history. I've edited such pieces. Now, forgive me, I am going to deploy a section break to discuss the origins of this genre. It is the only way I know how to write creative nonfiction.

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Determining the birth of creative nonfiction is complicated. One logical starting place might be the 1960s and authors such as Joan Didion, Gay Talese, Lillian Ross, Tom Wolfe and Hunter S. Thompson. These journalists turned away from the usual constraints and rules of reporting, arguing that the narrative voice was integral to the national stories that they were telling. Alongside them, novelists like Truman Capote in "In Cold Blood" and Norman Mailer in "The Armies of the Night" began to write nonfiction, yet they continued to deploy the creative elements used in their wildly successful works of fiction. This merging of journalism and creative writing formed a genre that focused on the writer's point of view and experience alongside the discussion of broader topics. No longer hidden behind the fourth wall, creative nonfiction allowed the writer to pass judgement on the events they reported on and people they encountered.

Yet, even in ancient Rome and Greece, writers like Plutarch, Tacitus and Herodotus reported on their lives and public events with arresting detail and clever turns of phrase — techniques characteristic of creative nonfiction. Herodotus wrote, "I am not engaged in writing history, but lives." Clearly, Herodotus saw himself as more than a mere reporter. He sought to uncover the private lives of public men as a way to immortalize the power of Ancient Greece. He addresses the reader directly, and in this authorial address there is power along with a sort of comfort. It is a comfort that lies in the ability to see another individual's interpretation of a set of events, facts and personas. You, as a reader, are no longer alone in making judgments. The writer is no longer alone with their thoughts.

It was this notion, this indisputable connection between writer and audience, that so endeared me to the genre of creative nonfiction. As a reader, I appreciated the straightforwardness of writers like Didion. I devoured her words easily and effortlessly; she was telling me what she meant. I respected the style of writers who spoke to readers without a veil of hazy allusions and metaphors — devices that are so often attributed to profoundness and literary prowess, but can frequently feel only vague and frustrating. In creative nonfiction I found a compromise. Here, literary technique abounded, but I was no longer lost in the maze of authorial implication. I stood instead on solid ground and in the concrete realm of authorial statement.

News pieces do not permit authorial statements. In many opinion pieces, a single view is imposed upon the reader. But sections like The Statement are a forum where these kinds of pieces are merged in the name of creative nonfiction. I have realized that when a piece of writing is not labeled in specific terms (like news or op-ed), readers are encouraged to analyze the writing from different angles and draw conclusions that are more solidly their own. The Statement emphasizes that areas such as news and opinion are compatible. When these forms are used together, the resulting piece can, at times, provide a more complete narrative. National trends have shown how dangerous it is when people consume news from only one source; a section like The Statement fights against the siloing of news and opinion sources.

Yet, I have also realized that for authorial statement to succeed, a writer must separate themselves meaningfully from their subject. If a writer fails, they risk narrative confusion and the accusation that they have equated their experiences to those they are writing about.

How to accomplish a clear division? The section break. It is a literal divide on the paper — there can be no confusion that the writer is transitioning from anecdote to history. The section break loudly declares that a piece has moved into the heart of its subject matter. Despite critics' desire to condemn creative nonfiction to little more than formulaic writing, there is power in this formula. It grants the reader the gift of clear intent and allows the writer to transition from self to other. Yet, it's worth considering why some readers remain disenchanted with such a formula.

Consider the five-paragraph essay. American writing standards once lauded the strict five-paragraph structure — taught to us in early middle school and upheld throughout high school — but now, we have begun to turn away from such a form. In her essay "My Anti-Five-Paragraph Essay Five-Paragraph Essay," English teacher Kim Zarins writes, "Despite this long tradition, the five-paragraph essay is fatally flawed. It cheapens a student's thesis, essay flow and structure, and voice."

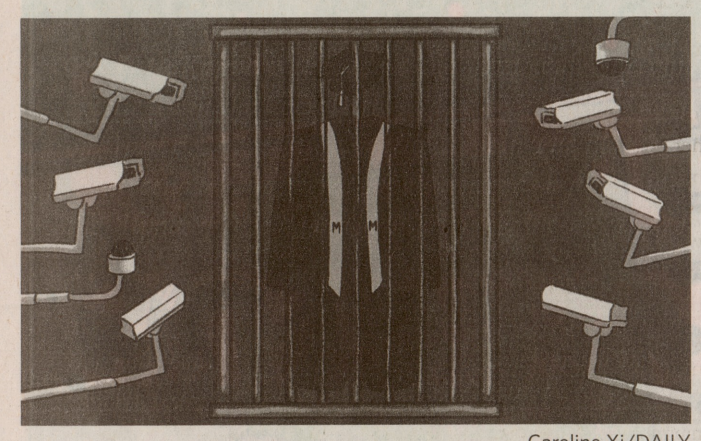
She goes on to argue that in writing argumentatively distinct paragraphs, the five-paragraph essay prohibits overlapping discussion of points made. Such a structure feels undeniably problematic. In productive conversation, we counter each other's arguments and return to earlier points. We hardly ever present an argument and then discard it, moving on to a completely new idea.

If I accept the critiques of the rigid and formulaic five-paragraph essay, then I must further justify why creative nonfiction remains exempt from a similar critique. I think the answer lies in the suggestion that the genre as it currently stands differs from the creative nonfiction of Didion, Capote and Plutarch. Instead of only deploying a mix of journalism and subjective narrative, the genre now carries more nuanced distinctions. These distinctions were encapsulated by the magazine "Creative Nonfiction," which noted that there are presently two threads of creative nonfiction rapidly developing. One thread continues to devote itself to fact-based narrative. The other, developing across universities, is a rise of lyrical essays and memoirs. This second version of the genre very often bypasses the rigorous standards of journalism in favor of greater creativity.

The developing divide between the two camps of creative nonfiction may provide insight into criticisms of the genre's formula. Those who dedicate themselves to narrative truth must continue to distinguish their reflections from their subject. However, this seems less necessary for those who have more fully embraced the creative side of the genre. We might then legitimately require seamless transitions between self and other — when we read creative works, there is a desire to lose oneself in the narrative. Section breaks can become a jarring reminder of the construction of prose.

And yet, what happens if we continue to further separate creative nonfiction into two camps? We're ultimately left with only fiction and nonfiction. So, I urge us to forgive the creative nonfiction writer's use of the section break and tendency towards subjective narrative. This is how we write about ourselves without only talking about ourselves. This is how we read about others without forgetting ourselves.

Authoritarianism, here and now



Caroline Xi/DAILY

NINA ATTISHA
Senior Opinion Editor

"We're in the midst of an authoritarian takeover of the U.S. government. It's been coming and coming, and not everybody is prepared to read it that way," Lee Bollinger said, former University of Michigan president and First Amendment scholar, in an interview with the "Chronicle of Higher Education" last month. "Our problem in part is a failure of imagination. We cannot get ourselves to see how this is going to unfold in its most frightening versions. You neutralize the branches of government; you neutralize the media; you neutralize universities, and you're on your way."

Bollinger's warning is not theoretical; we are watching our country's not-so-gradual descent into authoritarianism unfold before us, and today, right now, our University is being neutralized.

Universities have historically been places of free thought and expression. They have served as incubators of social and political change. These sanctuaries of independent free thought pose a threat to authoritarian leaders. It is no wonder that the attacks on higher education have become so frequent and heavy-handed. President Donald Trump's administration has an agenda to demolish the institutions that have been longtime supporters of free speech and dissent. From politically motivated attempts to censor diversity, equity and inclusion programs to defunding scientific research and cutting University funds, we are witnessing a targeted attack on academic freedom and independent thought.

The authoritarian playbook is right in front of us; we were warned. Although Trump distanced himself from the Heritage Foundation's Project 2025 during the election, the 900-page policy brief and his platform, Agenda 47, offer a preview of the governance Trump aims to emulate. A large part of Project 2025 proposes dismantling the Department of Education, eliminating DEI programs and sharply reducing National Institute of Health grants. These actions that seemed so distant and imaginary are now our reality, and they closely mirror the tactics used by authoritarians to dismantle democratic institutions.

CONTINUED AT MICHIGANDAILY.COM

Don't skip over 'world' news

ADRIANA SEAGE
Opinion Columnist

On March 19, protests erupted in Turkey. They opposed the detention of Istanbul's Mayor mamo lu, the Republican People's Party's candidate and opponent of President Erdogan, and which resulted in the government arresting more than 1,100 protesters. 66% of Americans read the newspaper over the course of a week, but many have missed the current events in Turkey, which are affecting thousands. While this information is accessible, people often gloss over world news.

There is no excuse to remain uninformed about global affairs when there is digital access to every free newspaper online. The long list of benefits that come from reading international news includes an increase in awareness of global events, enhanced global perspectives and a more cultivated cultural understanding and empathy.

Global medians show that 57% of people follow international news closely. The United States is a global superpower that has a degree of influence in almost every country in the world. It constantly dominates news headlines. It is a vital stakeholder in conflicts across the world; its roles in the war in Ukraine and the Israeli military campaign in Gaza have been the topic of news articles across the world for years. Additionally, the U.S. has significant influence on the global economy, transnational relations and global culture. Being informed about global politics is important for American citizens, given the significant influence the United States has on international affairs.

Reading world news is even more beneficial for students, as it helps them better navigate their studies and relationships within a multicultural campus and society. Newspapers promote social consciousness, exposing students to social issues affecting their communities and people across the world. This not only enhances the academic experience by providing real-world cases but also strengthens the ability to engage in meaningful discussions with peers.

Overall, the primary reason for reading the news is to be aware of political, social and environmental events — but there should not be a geographical limit. Staying updated on international affairs is an integral part of interacting with the world around us. It allows individuals to learn about pressing geopolitical issues, such as conflicts and human rights violations, that thousands of people are facing worldwide. Additionally, as the effects of climate change accelerate environmental crises, staying informed about global news becomes even more essential as every corner of the planet is affected.

Accurate news is the foundation of an informed society. Expanding the geographical and cultural range of news exposure allows citizens to make informed decisions. Almost 80% of newspaper readers vote in national or state elections. A person cannot accurately vote without understanding how the candidate's policies interact with international events.

CONTINUED AT MICHIGANDAILY.COM

Stop hating on female musicians

Haylee Bohm/DAILY

WILLEM DEGOOD
Opinion Analyst

In 2015, every time I heard the far-too-recognizable opening notes to "Shake it Off," "Style," "Blank Space" or any of the other decade-defining hit titles from Taylor Swift's 1989, I would instinctively jeer. With her sparkly outfits, youthful femininity, flowery lyrics and poppy production, Taylor Swift was the antithesis to my desire to become the strong, cool man I saw glorified in American culture. Yet, eight years later, I would find myself in the same room as Swift herself, along with 60,000 other fans at the Eras Tour in Detroit, wrists covered in bracelets and passionately belting out every single word to the same songs my 9-year-old self hated.

For most, music is an omnipresent component of our culture, traditions and daily life. With ever-increasing access to it, music has become a critical part of our own individual identities. Especially on college campuses where no study session is complete without earbuds or headphones, music is deeply connected to all of our emotions, experiences and personal development. However, the consumption of music by heterosexual, cisgendered men has become a device through which traditional notions of masculinity are maintained, and subsequently the continued relegation of women in society. To develop a healthier, more equal society, straight, cisgendered men need to open their minds and hearts to the acceptance of female artists, especially those like Taylor Swift that many continue to neglect — even though masculinity and the subsequent rejection of female musicians by men is a normalized practice in society.

It is proven that most men, specifically those who are straight and cisgender, tend to gravitate toward music with themes of violence, aggression, emotional reservation, strength and other aspects of traditional masculinity. I quickly gravitated toward classic rock standards like AC/DC, Guns & Roses, Mötley Crüe and any of the many other hard rock bands from the '70s and '80s that championed aggressive guitar instrumentals, hypermasculine independence and the power of being a *man* in society.

CONTINUED AT MICHIGANDAILY.COM

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE UM PHI BETA KAPPA CLASS OF 2025

Phi Beta Kappa *is the oldest and most widely recognized scholarly honorary society in America. Founded in 1776 at the College of William and Mary, it celebrates excellence in the liberal arts and sciences. The UM chapter, Alpha of Michigan, was founded in 1907 and inducted its hundred and seventeenth class into membership on April 6, 2025. An invitation to join Phi Beta Kappa requires a history of impeccable academic performance that reflects not only grades but breadth and depth of intellectual engagement. Membership as a junior is arguably the highest honor that an undergraduate in liberal arts and sciences can achieve. The Executive Committee of the Alpha of Michigan Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa recognizes and congratulates these new members of this venerable society.*

2025 Juniors

Madeleine Nicole Arend
Hermann Bauer
Hannah Lexis Cuenca
Bryndís Davis
James Joseph Doyle
Forrest Lee Gorby
Elizabeth Veronica Klepp
Tejas Ulhas Kudva
Emily Schall
Jinay Shah
Raegan Spear
Ananya Viswanathan
Owen Hyun Yoo

2025 Seniors

Eesha Kareena Acharya
Edith Adams
Zain Ahmad
Molly Amrine
Ella Andrews
Brady William Bank
Abigail Bartley
Charlotte Nicole Baxter
Sarah Bayne
Zara Bedella
Sarah Boeke
Sarah Paige Bost
Clara Martha Bowman
Zoe Bram
Lauren Elizabeth Brockwell
Anna Elizabeth Busse
Alex Piotr Bzdula
Alyssa Zen James Canatoy Caldito
Andrew Carlson
Mallory Carney
Evelyn Noelle Carroll
Michaela Castle
Katie Seoyun Chang
Audrey Marie Clayton
Rhegan Taytiana Clemons
Anya Coffeen Vandeven
Lillian Nicole Conybeare
Madeline Anne Chapman Curnow
Elizabeth Cushnir
Danielle M. De Coster
Eric Derr
Timothy David Devine
Gabriella Gianna Di Domenico
Leyna Elizabeth Doerr
Jordan Dohrman
Eliza Doss
Brooke Edelman
Quinn Ellingwood Engel
Kathryn Ennis
Eli Fabrick
Alyssa Yi-Lin Aurora Fan
Noah Fasczewski
Baoqin Fei
Jamie Sara Feuerman
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Makayla Rose Kegerreis
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Teresa Lee
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Mai Lewis
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Carter Allan Hua Qing Matties
Merin McCallum
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Becca Meyer-Rasmussen
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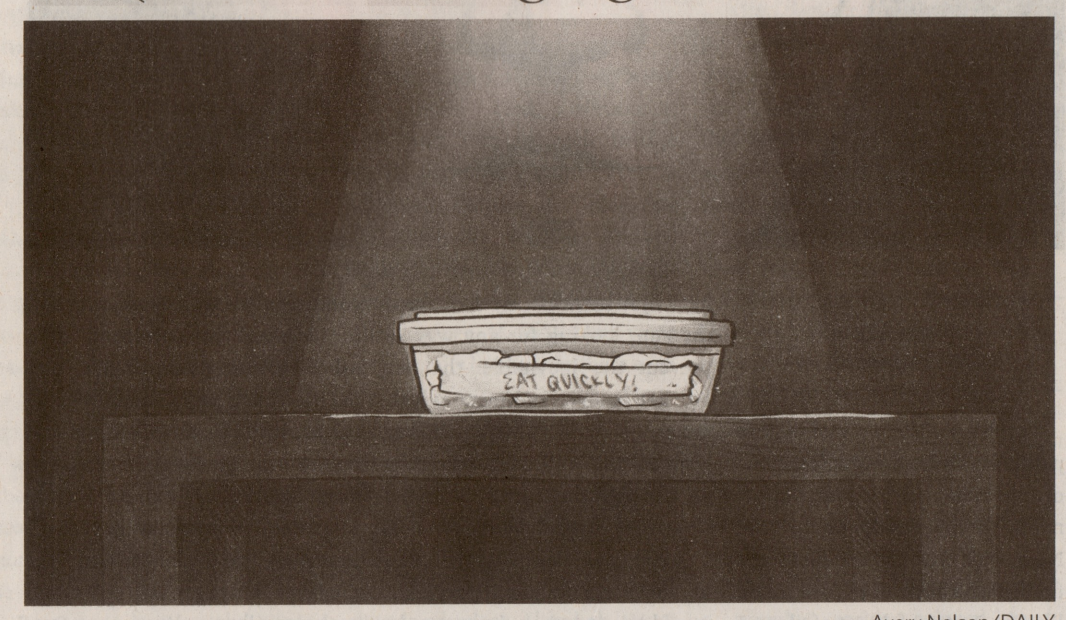
The Michigan Daily

Michigan in Color is The Michigan Daily's section by and for People of Color.

In this space, we invite our contributors to be vulnerable and authentic about our experiences and the important issues in our world today.

Our work represents our identities in a way that is both unapologetic and creative. We are a community that reclaims our stories on our own terms.

Food for thought (as well as longing and denial)



Avery Nelson/DAILY

FAHMIDA RAHMAN
MiC Columnist

"We need to clean out the fridge."

My roommates and I say this at least once a week, but rest assured, the actual "fridge cleaning" will take place much later. Amid the routine retorts of "ew," "absolutely not," and "how long has that been in there," you can most often find me saying "it's not mine" for almost every portable container that escapes the depths of the multicultural vault.

I've learned to easily recognize what belongs to whom based on the container itself, as well as a quick glimpse at the curries or stir fries that they're stuffed with. One of my roommates will always have a potato dish on hand, her mother urging her to eat more carbs to keep her full for a long day of classes. Another's mom hates to see her eat a meal without chicken or beef, protein being an absolute necessity. And you're bound to find a tuna bazzi in the fridge as well, a favorite of another roommate's. Her mom knows she could probably eat that for days without getting sick of it. Each mother's bond with their daughter is nestled in these 6" by 8" boxes: a quiet act of love, offering comfort and familiarity. These prized daughters, creating paths their mothers never had the opportunity to forge themselves. When they are venturing off into this new age of independence and self-discovery, let them do so on a full stomach.

Maybe I'm overthinking it. Who knows? They could just be handing off these meals as a moral obligation. But I don't care if it's a moral obligation, my mom hasn't cooked for me in forever. So excuse me as I make up these theatrical, Anthony Bourdain-esque takes.

I feel embarrassed having to ask my roommates if I can take a scoop or two of the meals their moms prepared for them. I know it's wrong to villainize your mother in this way, but I think she wants me to feel excluded, to hear the hunger that settles in my stomach and reflect on those times when I was full thanks to her. I've eaten my fair share of tenderly crafted meals at the expense of my mother's own well-being. And now, I've worn her culinary talents dry. Probably her interest in me too.

On occasion though, my mom will send me back to my apartment with a Pyrex container, heavy with the weight of unspoken tension. But because I can't tell what suddenly inclined her to hand me this half-hearted truce, it'll sit there for, admittedly, weeks on end. Someone will eventually complain and I find myself time and time again in front of the trash can, watching as the last of the oil slides off the glass rim.

When I do reach the bottom of what seems an endless pool of "maternal devotion" curry, my designated day to wash the dishes arrives and I groan. It's a pain to wash these kinds of dishes too. The turmeric stains never leave and I find myself brushing aggressively at the corners even though I know it's a lost cause. I try so hard to remove any trace of home that as the soap withers my skin, and I am convinced whatever I share of my mother's character has been scrubbed into oblivion.

What should serve as an exchange of love is transformed into a spiral of questioning if my mother views me as a nuisance or a blessing.

Interestingly enough though, I find my mom cooking all the time. This year, she started a catering business that has become her passion project. For each client, she packages their desired dishes in black, rectangular meal prep containers till they make a large stack on our kitchen counter. She argues that this new quest of hers will stick because she offers something her rivals, long-standing Indian restaurants, don't: a taste of home. I am not sure what she means by this "taste of home," a taste that has become foreign to my tongue. The flavor still lingers in my mind, but like a dish lacking salt, it's missing something.

I can't help but wonder if this new entrepreneurial venture is a quiet plea to fill the void. She pours herself into this matronly outlet, eager to demonstrate that the plodding rite of motherhood she was issued with does not define her. My mother is not just good at cooking. She is exceptionally accomplished in the art, and she was not going to let her talent perish in the hands of her thoughtless children and impassive husband. This new business would not only spotlight her culinary gift but for once, genuinely make her feel revered. Cooking, a traditionally maternal endeavor, has become my mother's trademark method for pushing against the status quo with what she knows how to do best: Be a wife.

Though food can serve as a medium for love, at its core it is merely sustenance. My mother's new transactional approach to food, I am sure, stems from feeding our endless greed without return of the slightest appreciation.

CONTINUED AT MICHIGANDAILY.COM

The myth of healing and the truth of becoming

YASMEEN NIMER
MiC Columnist

The word "healing" feels like a beautiful lie we all tell ourselves. I was first lied to through a screen of fluorescent lights and sterile sheets as I lay in a hospital bed, my body rebelling against years of suppression. "You need to heal," the physicians said, and my family nodded along, their eyes filled with a desperate hope that I would return to a version of myself they'd recognize. "You need to regulate your emotions, control your behaviors," they insisted, as if my entire life hadn't been a masterclass in controlling, suppressing, hiding the pain inside me. Being told to "just be normal" was the chorus of my childhood.

What is this "normal" we're supposed to return to? Everyone had their own definition. My doctor saw normal as numbers on a chart stabilizing. My parents saw it as the compliant daughter who wouldn't dare to add to their stress, because they had so much to deal with already. My friends wanted the version of me with a contagious laugh and sunny exterior. But for me, "normal" had been a complicated patchwork of generational trauma — a household where feelings were suppressed, where success meant silencing your struggles the way my parents and their parents and their parents once did. "Normal" was absorbing my siblings' physical pains as my own. It was the slow-motion collapse that eventually left me depressed, anxious, disconnected from my own body and needs. "Normal" was learning to make myself small, to suppress my needs, to find safety in self-destruction. So I ask again — is that really where I'm supposed to return?

For years, I believed that with enough time and work, I could undo the damage. I thought healing meant complete restoration — that eventually, I would look in the mirror and see her again. That girl with light dancing behind her eyes, with shoulders that hadn't yet learned to curl inward to protect her heart. I imagined a version of myself unburdened by constant wariness, able to experience joy without waiting for it to be stolen away. But no matter how much time passed, no matter how much I willed myself to "get better," she never came back.

Society craves simple narratives: It's embedded in our cultural language of recovery. You were broken, you healed, you moved on. The reason this narrative persists is because it's comfortable — it doesn't challenge our understanding of identity as something fixed and stable. But we are not the same people we were before experiencing pain. This renovation isn't just philosophical, it lives in our bodies. As Bessel van der Kolk explains in "The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma," trauma produces actual physiological changes, including "a recalibration of the brain's alarm system" and "alterations in the system that filters relevant information from irrelevant." I felt this rewiring in how a slammed door could trigger me into fight-or-flight, how a casual touch on my shoulder that once felt comforting now sent electricity through my spine. My nervous system had been rewritten by experience, creating neural pathways I couldn't simply erase. There is no undoing it, only adapting to what we've become.

The growth afterwards manifests physically as well. It's in the way you stand taller, with shoulders that no longer curl inward. It's in how your voice finds notes of certainty where there once was only apology. It's in your eyes that now hold another's gaze instead of darting away, reflecting a light that wasn't there before.

I was standing in my kitchen, washing dishes, my hands soaked in soapy water, when this realization hit me — she was gone forever, that carefree girl who laughed without checking if it was too loud, who trusted without calculating the risk, who didn't flinch at sudden movements. My chest tightened and for a moment, I couldn't breathe. I gripped the edge of the sink, water dripping down my wrists, and waited for grief to crash over me.

But what came instead shocked me — relief. Pure, undeniable relief. Like suddenly recognizing that a chronic pain you'd grown accustomed to had finally stopped. In that ordinary moment between soap bubbles and dirty plates, I gave myself permission to stop trying. I didn't need to heal back to her. I didn't need to pretend the scars weren't there. The irregularity of my panicked breaths seemed to whisper: "It's okay. There is only forward now."

Trauma gets stored, not just as memories, but as physical imprints within our muscles, posture and breath. Healing doesn't mean erasing those imprints. It means learning to live within a body that remembers. Real healing isn't about going back; it's about re-becoming. It's about stepping into something new, something that couldn't exist without everything we've been through. Yet our families, schools and social circles often push us toward restoration rather than reconstruction. Who benefits? Those who prefer familiar patterns over the uncertainty of growth? Those who prefer simple solutions to complex problems? Those who inflicted the pain in the first place?

I still remember my sister's face, revealing not just confusion, but also something resembling betrayal, when I told her I wasn't trying to get back to who I was before. "But I thought you were getting better," she stuttered, as if my change was something shameful. That's when I realized: My family had been celebrating my "healing" only when it looked like I was erasing what happened.

CONTINUED AT MICHIGANDAILY.COM

Aamina Hussein/MiC

On my way!

LIA DU
MiC Columnist

To my dismay, the Michigan Flyer upped their prices this year. I think I've spent at least $300 on bus tickets within the past two years alone, but, truthfully, I'm not too upset about it. There's something about this $16 (previously $15) bus ride between East Lansing and Ann Arbor that turns strangers into storytellers, rides into confessionals and in-betweens into chapters that narrate the various lives I've lived. Or, perhaps, I eavesdrop more than I care to admit.

I would like to say this eavesdropping isn't intentional, but it is: the stories of old couples, new graduates, the mid-distance college relationships traveling weekends to see one another — I've always been enraptured by the unspoken complexities of these passing moments. The quiet realization that every person on this bus has a life as intricate and full as my own. And only within this finite moment, for this brief stretch of highway, will our stories intertwine.

Sometimes I wonder, just as I think about them, if someone has wondered about me.

I first took the Michigan Flyer two years ago to visit my friends at Michigan State University, which I previously attended. I arrived 15 minutes early, just as the ticket had told me, only for the bus to arrive in Ann Arbor 20 minutes late. I didn't know it at the time, but that ride became the first page in a year-long chapter of finding myself. I had just transferred, and while the idea of a new beginning was romantic in theory, I was immediately greeted with the reality: Connections are hard and connections take time.

My semester began to blur into a cycle of countdowns to weekend trips, the tethers between the loneliness I knew and the warmth I chased. This ritual of departures and arrivals became a desperate escape from this new sense of alienation and yearning for what once was. I missed the sense of community, the people I had grown to love and, most of all, the identity that I had created from the ground up in my first year of university — free from familial expectations and the confining four walls of my childhood bedroom.

Thankfully, I made new friends at the University of Michigan, and eventually, these journeys began to change. They became an active choice — not to return to what I had nor who I was previously, but to reminisce, reconnect and remember. It wasn't just the excitement of seeing old connections that pulled me forwards, but the growing ache to be near someone — a partner — whose presence had begun to mean something more. The kind of more that makes time pass too quickly, and that makes the 65 miles that stretch between East Lansing and Ann Arbor feel longer than it truly is. Somewhere along the way, these bus rides had shifted from an obligatory means of fleeing loneliness to a voluntary pursuit of love — to old friends, to new selves and to the one that I know will stay by my side for a million lifetimes.

I've come to think that the Michigan Flyer has become a kind of marker in my life — a transitory, neutral space between the people I love, places I've seen, lives I've led. To put it simply, this bus has seen everything: my (many) public breakdowns, tearful goodbyes, eager hellos. It's seen me fall in love. It's seen me leave parts of my heart behind in every city I've passed through. It's seen me become someone softer, wiser, steadier.

I'd like to believe that I've grown within this space. Each trip, I return as a slightly different version of myself: a little more tired, a little more certain, a little more found. The rhythm of the Flyer's wheels on I-95 has accompanied so many transitions that it has begun to move me in more ways than one — not merely through these cities, but through grief and hope, through solitude and love, through all the quiet thresholds of my becoming. The crossroads between who I was, who I am and who I will be. An ode to all the stories I will carry with me, and all the ones I've yet to live.

Perhaps I'll find another piece of myself next weekend. I know I will.

Finding freedom in feeling

BOWEN DENG
MiC Columnist

This past February was perhaps my most stressful month yet. Every day, there was a new exam to study for, a new essay to write, another recruiter scheduling an interview or (even worse) another email informing me of yet another internship rejection. The adage "when it rains, it pours" is, unfortunately, very true: The academic and extracurricular-related stress crept its way into all parts of my life. Emotionally exhausted, I turned to friends for support, only to find that they were just as busy as I was – sometimes unreachable. In these moments of loneliness, I was left with only myself and my emotions for company, and I came to the startling realization that these emotions were beasts that I had never learned how to handle.

This constant bombardment of tasks and unsettling thoughts, coupled with the gray skies and cutting winds of winter, drained me of the usual enthusiasm I had for life. Every morning, I stared at the plate of eggs in front of me, reminding myself that I simply had to get through today and then this week, and that next week would bring some relief. Rinse and repeat. This was nothing new. My second semester courses always felt more difficult and less interesting, my social life more barren, my sense of self more tumultuous. Monotony would turn to indifference, which then spiraled into depression. All of these were constantly recurring problems, yet they never seemed to get any easier. As I once again navigate this difficult time, allow me to reflect on the complexity of my emotions.

For the longest time, I have distinguished between "good" and "bad" emotions. Part of this was psychological: Negativity bias is the tendency to feel negative emotions more, dwelling on them longer and reacting to them more strongly. Intended to be a survival mechanism, this learned trait from infancy explains why you can vividly recall the embarrassing moment you had in 4th grade, focus on criticism over compliments or let a snarky comment from a stranger ruin an otherwise good day. Societal norms further play into negativity bias, deeming negative emotions as inherently bad and positive emotions as inherently good.

When I was younger, my mom would ask me to bring her copies of all my recent grades so she could track my progress. The dreaded day eventually came where I received a C on a history test. As I handed her the stack of papers, I prayed that sticking it after an English paper and a lab report — both of which I had gotten an A on — would soften the inevitable scolding. I was wrong. "Why is this grade so bad? What happened in history class? What've you been doing all this time? Do you want to fail this class?" I swallowed, failing to find a response to her questions. Never mind that I had gotten two As to the one C, never mind that this was only the second test, never mind that I was still in very good shape in my other classes. In that moment, all that mattered was her outburst at me.

Asian American parenting is known to be "authoritarian," with children often under extreme scrutiny. My mother would be the first person to admit that she used to focus on my flaws more than my strengths. In addition to the usual concern over grades, she was hyperfocused on my handwriting, believing that she could mold it in her image. At times, she forced me to study in front of her so she could monitor my writing. I would grip my pencil until my knuckles were white and my shirt was drenched in sweat, spending what felt like hours over every motion and gesture like I was a painter working on his magnum opus. Whenever she felt it was getting too messy, she made it known: "Is that I or L? How can you read this? Do you care about being neat at all?" As I worked on other assignments days later, her words would echo in my head, forcing me to change my grip or straighten my words a little.

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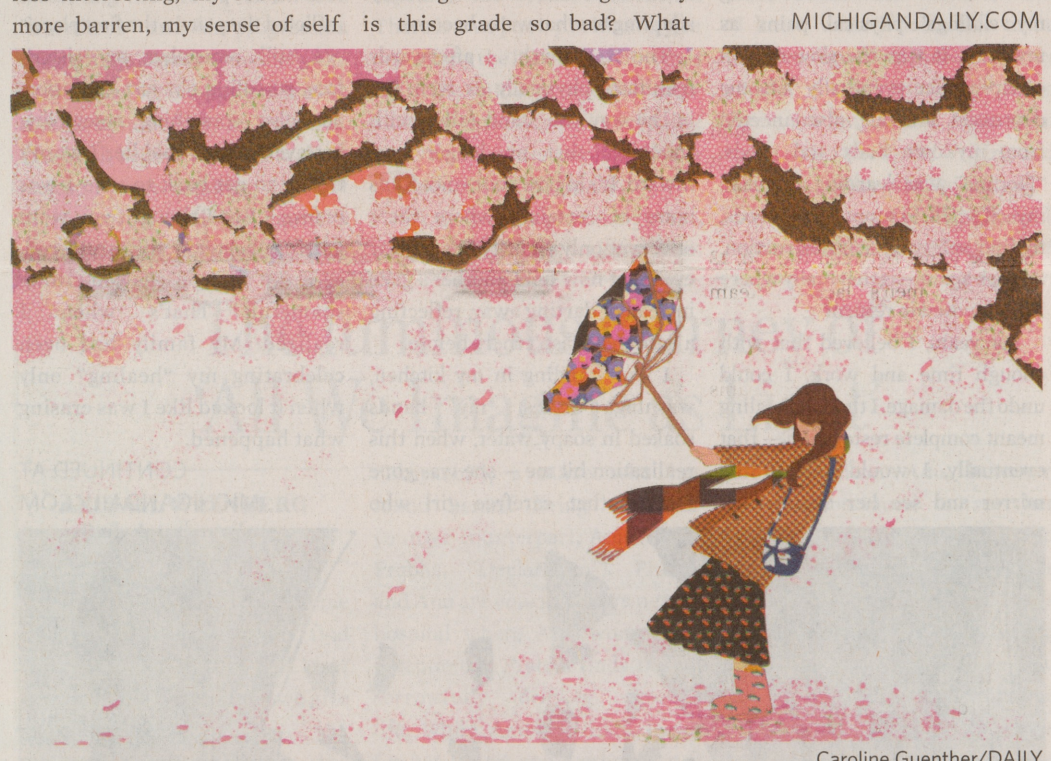
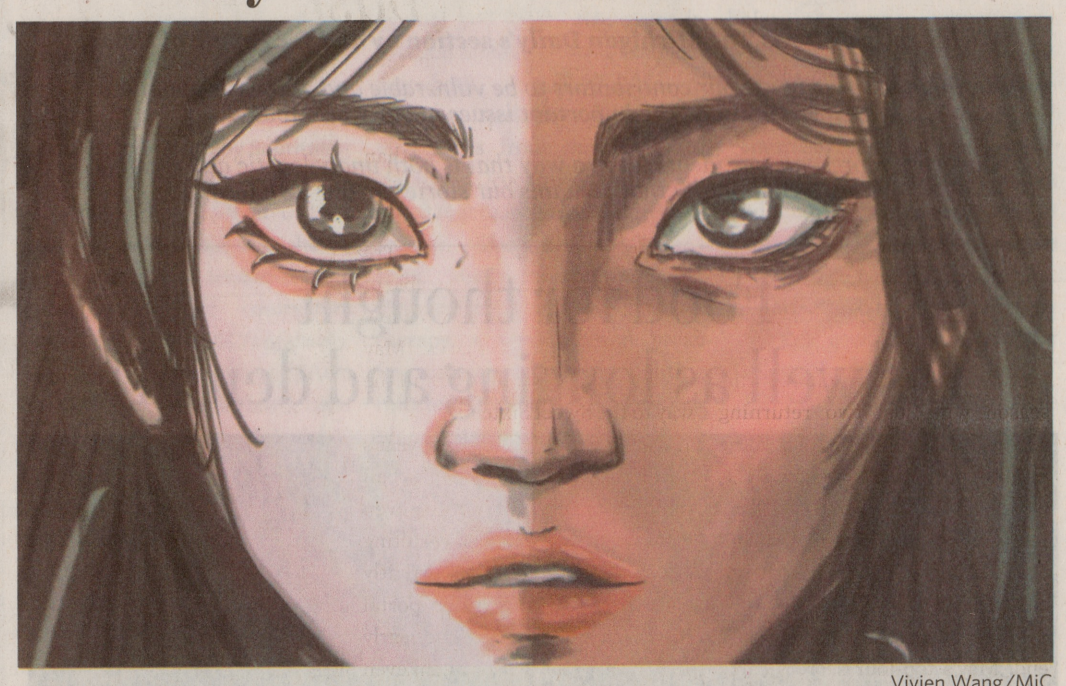


Caroline Guenther/DAILY

I am my father's daughter: My olive skin-heritance



Vivien Wang/MiC

NHI VO
MiC Columnist

I grew up with two Vietnamese parents with opposing perceptions of skin tone, but because I spent much of my childhood in Việt Nam with my dad's side of the family, who were all olive-skinned like me, I never felt out of place. I loved to be outdoors, spending my time catching miscellaneous frogs and geckos. But every time I would put on shorts and a T-shirt to venture out, she would reprimand me for exposing so much skin to the sun, warning me that one day I'd look like a rice farmer if I continued basking in the heat without covering up. I did not care for her comments, countering them by telling her that I looked just like my father, uncles and grandparents — how could anything possibly be wrong with that?

Unfortunately, my attitude changed when I immigrated to America and met my mom's side of the family, whose first words to me were along the lines of, "Wow you're so dark, you don't even look Vietnamese!" My mom joined in, agreeing with what everyone was saying and taking recommendations for whitening skin creams that I should try. The following year and thereafter, at least one of my Christmas gifts was some type of whitening skin product. It also did not help that I lived in a predominantly white town and attended a school where the only Asians were my siblings and cousins, making it that much easier for my mom to draw comparisons between me and my peers, including the friends that I brought home.

As a young and impressionable child, I slowly but surely I started to believe what my family was telling me. I started to stay indoors more, and, when I would go outside, I made sure to wear long pants and shirts, even when it was warm. I became obsessed with wearing sunscreen and hats that shielded my face from the sun, looking for any way to prevent the inevitable: the tan I'd get every summer, which made me darker than I already was. As my reflection stared at me through the mirror, I started imagining how I would look if I were porcelain-skinned like my mother, how much prettier I would be, and, more importantly, how I would finally have her approval, something I had yearned to receive for as long as I could remember.

One day though, something in me changed. As I was slathering on sunscreen in the bathroom, and as the long-sleeved shirt and pants I chose for school lay on my bed, I caught a glimpse of my father looking at me through the mirror. He was a man of few words, which never mattered because I always understood him perfectly, and that moment was no different. He never went against my mother when she would criticize me, but in that moment when I met his gaze, his soft and fatherly brown eyes radiated sadness and hurt. Hurt that his daughter, who inherited her skin color from him, no longer wanted to claim that as part of who she was. Although it was fleeting, his glance said a thousand words, words I had subconsciously refused to hear before. It was on that fateful day that I silently promised him that I would perceive that inheritance with pride once again.

When we returned to Việt Nam to see my dad's family, even though it was mid-July and in the peak of summer, my mom was always covered head-to-toe in clothing, complete with a face mask to protect her from the sun from rays that were much more potent than Michigan's. She was over the moon when the employees at the photo studio did her makeup two shades lighter than her actual skin tone for our family pictures, gleaming at how pale she looked. She was shocked when I didn't follow in her steps this time, to see me apply a normal amount of sunscreen and wear clothes fitting for warmer temperatures. She asked me what happened to my old habits and lectured me on how the amount of sunblock I applied wasn't "nearly enough," because it wasn't making my skin paler than it actually was. After relentless interrogation, I finally told her the truth: I love my skin color and nothing will ever change that. Out of the corner of my eye, I spotted a smile creep across my dad's face, and that's when I knew that it was all he ever wanted to hear. His silent happiness pushed me to embrace the reflection that stared back at me, no longer yearning for her to change.

My mom's beliefs about lighter skin being more desirable originated from centuries marked by beliefs about socioeconomic status and what is considered to be "high-class." Trina Jones, who is a law professor and director at Duke's Center on Law, Race and Public Policy, traveled to Việt Nam and documented her observations about skin color in an article published in the UC Irvine Law Review, stating that "dark skin marked one as a laborer, as a person who toiled in the fields as opposed to one who lived a more sheltered and privileged existence indoors." This ideology is most prevalent in Asian countries affected by European colonization, such as the Philippines, Cambodia and Laos, where the colonizers' noticeably lighter skin indicated the type of wealth and prosperity that these traditionally agricultural communities lacked at the time. Although these countries are now independent, these perceptions about socioeconomic status through skin tone persist. As per Jones' article, the skin-whitening product market has also amassed billions of dollars in many Asian countries and their ads plaster every restaurant wall, billboard and TV advertisement, displaying the lasting sentiment about the desirability of paler skin.

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COLLEGIATE LECTURE SERIES

Thursday, May 8, 2025
4:00 p.m. –5:30 p.m.
LSA Building, Multipurpose Room

Probing Polymer and Biological Molecules at Buried Interfaces in Situ in Real Time

ZHAN CHEN
Michael D. Morris Collegiate Professor of Chemistry, Macromolecular Science and Engineering, Biophysics, and Applied Physics

Troubles with Health Care Civil Rights

ANNA KIRKLAND
Kim Lane Scheppele Collegiate Professor of Women's and Gender Studies

Microplastics are Here, There, and Everywhere

ANNE MCNEIL
Carol A. Fierke Collegiate Professor of Chemistry, Program in the Environment, and Macromolecular Science and Engineering

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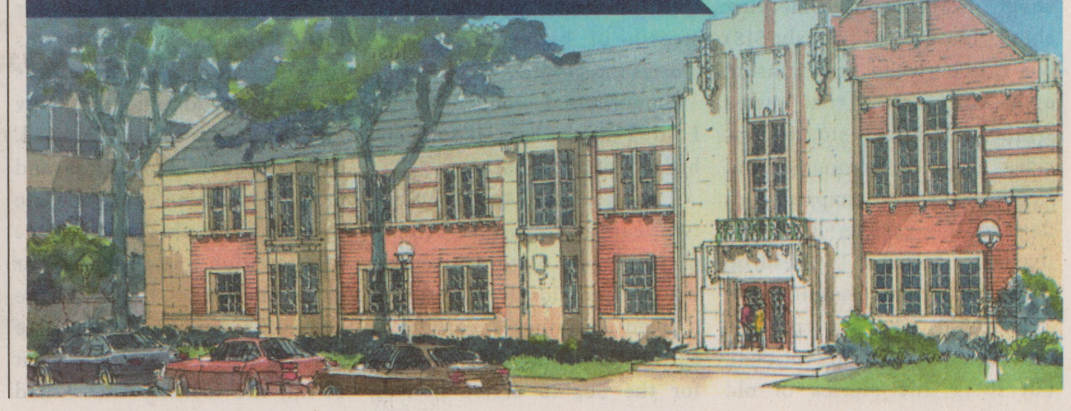
Public lectures and reception; you my attend in person or virtually. For more information, including the Zoom link, visit ***https://events.umich.edu/event/133978*** *or call* ***734.516.1027.***

M | OFFICE OF STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

The Board for Student Publications Seeks a New Member

The new member from the University campus community would serve a three-year term beginning July 1, 2025. Current faculty, staff, and students are encouraged to apply. **The deadline for applications is Monday, April 28th.**

Visit pub.umich.edu/about/apply or contact General Manager, Kathy Ciesinski, kciesins@umich.edu to learn more.



BASKETBALL

SportsMonday: With different approaches to the transfer portal era, Michigan basketball programs are set up to flourish

NOAH KINGSLEY
Daily Sports Writer

Last offseason, the Michigan men's and women's basketball teams' rosters were in a similar state. Whether it was due to a coaching change or a throng of players heading to the transfer portal, both rosters entered this season with just two returning players who averaged at least nine minutes per game during the 2023-24 season.

To fill in their rosters, men's coach Dusty May and women's coach Kim Barnes Arico took different approaches. By season's end, May's top-four scorers came to the Wolverines via the portal, while three of Barnes Arico's four top scorers were high school recruits.

This offseason, May and Barnes Arico are taking different approaches to the transfer portal once again. But despite those differences, both programs are adapting to a new era of college basketball in a way that sets them up for future success.

Start with the men's team. May didn't exactly have a choice but to hit the portal hard last year, but the results were much better than expected. Danny Wolf and Vlad Goldin turned into one of the best frontcourts in the country, Tre Donaldson proved to be capable of leading the offense and with a few other supplemental pieces, May led his portal-formed roster all the way to the Sweet Sixteen.

And as successful as last year's portal class was, it only got the ball rolling more for May's to be even more aggressive in his recruiting efforts this offseason. Currently boasting the top transfer portal class in the country, the early returns for next season seem even more promising for Michigan — the Wolverines have started popping up as high as fifth in some way-too-early top 25 rankings.

"We were much better received this year than we were last," May told The Michigan Insider. "... I think when we were recruiting the big guys, because our FAU teams didn't play that way, they questioned whether it would work."

Sydney Hastings-Wilkins and Georgia McKay/DAILY

With proof of concept in the form of Wolf and Goldin, May has a better product to sell this offseason. That earned him commitments from former Illinois forward Morez Johnson Jr., UCLA center Aday Mara and the top-ranked portal player, UAB forward Yaxel Lendeborg. Replacing Wolf and Goldin is a difficult task nonetheless, but Michigan's frontcourt should at least have the requisite talent to do so.

There is one caveat there: Lendeborg may still forgo the Wolverines for the NBA Draft. That's a risk that comes with recruiting the best players in the portal, but it's a gamble May has said he's willing to take. And even if his approach means that his teams have more one-year players than some rosters of Michigan past, with the way May has shown he can recruit, it's a risk that bodes well for future success.

Barnes Arico, on the other hand, is less focused on the one-and-done impact player when it comes to roster construction. With players having to stay longer before jumping to the next level, women's college basketball tends to be a more developmental sport than the men's version, and Barnes Arico is a particularly development-focused coach.

In fact, following six of her players transferring away last offseason, Barnes Arico established that, despite the rapid emergence of the portal, she wouldn't be changing her philosophy.

"We consider ourselves program builders," Barnes Arico said Oct. 22, 2024. "What we do may be different than a lot of other programs. We're not a program that's based on the transfer portal. ... That's not the kind of culture of our university. It's not the culture of our program. We really pride ourselves on building something."

So following that mass exodus, Barnes Arico didn't hit the portal hard looking for plug-and-play impact players. She counted on her best recruiting class ever, elevated past contributors in Jordan Hobbs and Greta Kampschroeder to key roles and led the Wolverines to their seventh-straight NCAA Tournament.

As a result, the biggest get for Michigan this offseason isn't anyone new coming in — it's who's sticking around. The star freshman guard trio of Syla Swords, Olivia Olson and Mila Holloway would each have been coveted transfers had they decided to go elsewhere, but all three are staying in An Arbor.

Still, Barnes Arico's mindset seems to have changed a little bit. The Wolverines lacked size this season, often relying on a five-guard lineup. So while she still might not prefer the transfer portal as a way to build a roster, she dipped her toes in and plucked the Patriot League Player of the Year, Bucknell forward Ashley Sofilkanich, to support her returners. She also added 6-foot-2 Bruins forward Kendall Dudley for good measure.

And between those gets and an impending sophomore-year leap for her star guards, Barnes Arico's reserved approach to the portal — particularly in terms of recruiting her own roster — also has Michigan women's basketball set up for success.

CONTINUED AT MICHIGANDAILY.COM

SOFTBALL

Michigan defeats Rutgers, 8-4, sweeps series

MATTHEW AUCHINCLOSS
Daily Sports Writer

Unlike Sunday, where the Michigan softball team swung hard for the fences, or Saturday, where the Wolverines scraped out hits in a pitching duel, the offense Monday was neither. Full of line drives and stolen bases, Michigan's batters seized every opportunity they had to advance around the diamond and score.

In a performance that illustrated the versatility of the Wolverines' (31-12 overall, 9-4 Big Ten) offense, Michigan defeated Rutgers (17-27, 1-12), 8-4, to sweep the series. Helped substantially by miscues from the Scarlet Knights, the Wolverines pounced on every opportunity they had to secure the win.

Michigan's opportunism was evident from the first inning. The first run of the game was scored off a bouncing ground ball from sophomore center fielder Jenissa Conway. At first glance, it looked as though Conway was going to be out. But Rutgers first baseman Riley Hwang couldn't collect the ball fast enough, and with sophomore second baseman Indiana Langford already on second with a steal and third off a passed ball, she got home safely.

The second two runs of the inning were off the bat of senior left fielder Ellie Sieler, who hit a strong line drive into center field. It was a lovely piece of hitting, but lovelier by far for the Wolverines were the two runs they scored off of it — from runners who had also advanced on stolen bases.

The second inning offered more of the same. Rutgers failed to secure a Langford bunt and couldn't properly field a hit from Conway. With the bases loaded, senior right fielder Ella Stephenson drove a three-RBI double down the third base line to clear the bases.

In just two innings, Michigan was up 6-0, but the scoring wasn't over yet. In the sixth inning, after struggling to generate any offensive momentum for four innings and losing ground to Rutgers, which had scored three runs of its own, the Wolverines came roaring back.

After a leadoff single from junior third baseman Maddie Erickson, senior shortstop Ella McVey sent a bouncing ball up the right field line. With a Scarlet Knight fielder unable to secure the ball, the ball continued rolling toward the back wall. Erickson and McVey were both reached home safely, McVey with her arms in the air in celebration. For the third time all game, the Wolverines had put themselves in position to score with simple hits before a long hit sent their runners across the plate.

Michigan's offense wasn't as flashy as it had been in previous games, but it didn't need to be.

Gritty play combined with solid hitting and capitalizing on errors allowed the Wolverines to get the series sweep, and a key conference win.

Sydney Hastings-Wilkins/DAILY

MEN'S LACROSSE

No. 13 Michigan does the little things to beat No. 18 Rutgers, 8-6

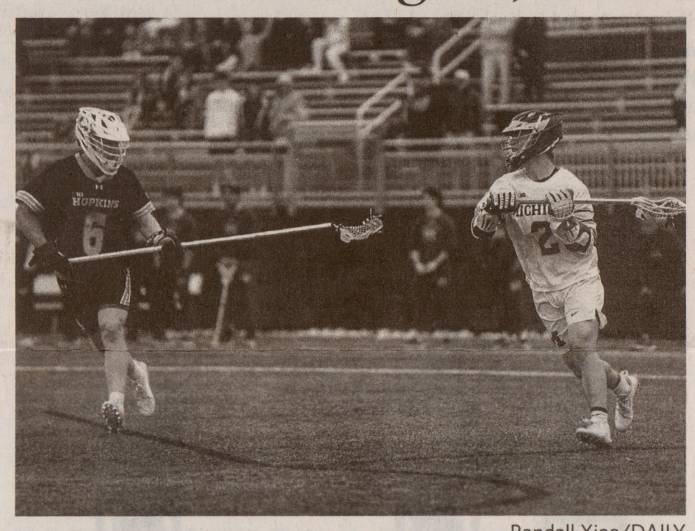
JACK GARVEY
Daily Sports Writer

In a game between two similarly ranked teams that had four ties, four lead changes and no lead greater than two goals, it was clear neither team had a major personnel or scheme advantage. So, the game between the No. 13 Michigan men's lacrosse team (7-5 overall, 4-2 Big Ten) and No. 18 Rutgers (6-7, 2-2) came down to little things such as special teams and turnovers.

The Wolverines dominated the Scarlet Knights on special teams, killing all four penalties against them. Showing up in moments like these helped Michigan win, 8-6

For example, with the game tied at three in the second quarter, Michigan sophomore midfielder Jack Marlow received an unnecessary roughness penalty, giving Rutgers a golden opportunity to take the lead on Michigan, whose offense had gone stagnant. The Wolverines responded by smothering the Scarlet Knights on the man down, allowing only one shot and clearing the ball. However, Michigan's special-teams dominance didn't end there

The Wolverines also took advantage of the man-up opportunities, scoring on one in the third period when graduate attacker Lukas Statnat faked a shot and found senior midfielder Aidan Mulholland. Mulholland launched a 30-foot shot over the head of Rutgers goalie Cardin Stoller to give Michigan a 4-3 lead over the Scarlet Knights, ending a 20 minute scoring drought for both teams.



Randall Xiao/DAILY

"In the Big Ten when you're in the meat of the season, you don't get a lot of opportunities in special teams," Wolverines coach Kevin Conry said. "When you do they're really high stakes, and our man-up team did a great job. We've got some new guys in there and to get that goal was huge."

Another one of those key spots came with Rutgers down by two goals with 2:40 left in the game. Rutgers called a timeout to discuss their attack plan, but it was to no avail. The Scarlet Knights missed their only two shots after this timeout and turned the ball over twice, which was a common theme for them throughout the game as they had 25 turnovers to Michigan's 16. This was another small edge that came up big for the Wolverines, as these crucial turnovers late in the game allowed them to run the clock out on their way to victory.

"Coming out of that timeout, it was let's see how much time we can kill" Conry said "Rutgers was smart. They put their goalie in attack so they had a bunch of defensive players on, but we kept our defensive players on so we tried to kill as much time as we could."

CONTINUED AT MICHIGANDAILY.COM

WOMEN'S LACROSSE

No. 17 Michigan dismantles No. 5 Johns Hopkins in upset win, 13-2

HANK SANCHEZ
Daily Sports Writer

If you want to beat the best teams, you need to play a complete game—on Sunday, the Michigan women's lacrosse team turned one in.

The 17th-ranked Wolverines (10-4 overall, 4-2 Big Ten) excelled in every facet of the game against No. 5 Johns Hopkins (10-4, 4-2), in a stunning result as Michigan walloped the Blue Jays, 13-2. The stout Wolverines defense held Johns Hopkins scoreless for the last 40 minutes due to its physical play and excellent work in net from senior Erin O'Grady, giving its offense time to put the game out of reach.

"We rested (O'Grady) last weekend, and she got healthy and put in work," Michigan coach Hannah Nielsen said. "It's who she is, it's the player she is, and big players step up in big moments."

Just half a minute into the game, Michigan's passing drew the Blue Jays' defense away from junior attacker Calli Norris, who drifted in front of the net and received a pass just a few feet from the crease. Norris spun off a defender and rifled a sidearm shot, ignoring the contact to open the scoring early.

Johns Hopkins' defense had no answers for Norris, who set a career-high five goals on just six shots.

"I just shouted her out in the locker room," Nielsen said. "She worked on (shooting accuracy) this week, and shooting has been a little bit of her Achilles' heel this year. And worked on a couple different things just to address some of her form."

The Wolverines' defense frustrated the Blue Jays early by playing tight and aggressively swiping at the ball, forcing three turnovers before the Johns Hopkins attack registered a shot. When the Blue Jays did get to the net, they rarely succeeded, and O'Grady finished with 12 saves and an absurd .857 save percentage.

"I miss being on the field with my teammates," O'Grady said. "I miss this feeling, winning with them, going to battle with them. It was all gratitude all day, and that just fueled me for the whole game."

Although its defense was stellar throughout, Michigan's attack didn't start pouring it on until the second quarter.

Coming out of a timeout, Johns Hopkins drew up a play to get attacker Taylor Hoss a clean look to drive in front of the net to bring the lead back down to 4-2. On the faceoff, freshman faceoff specialist Emma Burke flipped the ball high over her head and right to senior attacker Jill Smith, who raced down the field and found senior attacker Kaylee Dyer on the wing.

Bela Fischer/DAILY

Dyer sprinted behind the net before cutting back to lose her defender and flicked a shot into the upper left corner for her third goal in 10 minutes. For the next stretch, the Wolverines' offense, defense and faceoff room put on a masterful performance, stretching their lead from three goals to eight by the same time in the third period.

Michigan outworked the Blue Jays from the faceoff circle as well, more than doubling up Johns Hopkins on draw control wins, 13 to six. The Wolverines' performance from the faceoff circle built up a possession deficit, which kept their defenders' legs fresh and allowed their offense to string together multiple possessions.

By the time the game ended, Michigan was leading by double digits and had triggered a running clock against a top-5 team.

"This year we've proven in moments, what team we are, but it hasn't been consistent enough to get us the win, or we have to come from behind and scrape out a win," Nielsen said. "I think they just did a good job of it today, from top to bottom, offense to defense."

As the postseason approaches, the Wolverines need to put in well-rounded performances if they want to challenge the best teams. And against some of the toughest competition Sunday, Michigan put the pieces together.

SPORTSWEDNESDAY

MICHIGAN 10 | MOUNT ST. MARY'S 0

Michigan bats capitalize on Mount St. Mary's mistakes to sweep series

LYRA SHARMA
Daily Sports Writer

In just the first inning, the Michigan baseball team took a 4-0 lead against Mount St. Mary's, something that isn't wholly abnormal for its normally fiery offense. What made the occurrence unusual. however, was the fact that the Wolverines only elicited a single hit. In the 10 at-bats in the bottom of the first frame, the Mountaineers' gave up five walks and a hit-by-pitch which Michigan used to deliver a punishing victory.

Despite the lopsided scoreline, it wasn't the Wolverines' (22-14) power at the plate that brought them the win, rather their ability to exploit the pitfalls of Mount St. Mary's (14-19) defense. Michigan kept its series against the Mountaineers clean with its 10-0 run-rule triumph in Game 3.

"Big confidence booster when you know you're not hitting, the teams not hitting, to their best ability," freshman third baseman Tyler Inge said. "We know we can. I think we just still did really well offensively and putting the ball in play, making the defense work, allowing for good things to happen."

Graduate shortstop Benny Casillas started the first inning off hot. With a full count, Casillas didn't bow down to the pressure, recording a single and his first and only hit of the inning with a grounder that snuck out to left field.

Just two batters later, the bases were loaded off of a walk and hit-by-pitch, and eventually all three of these runners made it to home plate. The Wolverines tallied an additional run after junior center fielder Greg Pace Jr. was once again walked, allowing senior infielder Cole Caruso to bring the score up, 4-0.

"It was more of what they did, not what we did," Michigan coach Tracy Smith said. "But to get four runs in the bottom the first let everybody relax and just be comfortable, that's always huge."

Throughout their season, the Wolverines have consistently relied on massive, whirlwind performances from their offense and found a backbone in their power hitters. But Sunday's game, and especially the first inning, showed that Michigan can find success beyond its norm by playing scrappy and just hitting the marks. It's not about hits, it's about runs, and finding their footing without the former allowed the Wolverines to blossom through the rest of the game.

Michigan's offense struck once more in the bottom of the third, although this time its three hits were better aligned with the two runs they gained. After singling, graduate catcher Matt Spear advanced to second on a wild pitch, setting him up perfectly for Pace's at-bat, in which a single allowed Spear to score.

Carrying on with aggressive playing style he has showcased in prior contests, Pace dashed to steal second base during Casillas' at-bat. With the final hit of the inning, Casillas sent a grounder to center field, and a fielding error allowed him to secure a double and score Pace to extend the lead to 6-0.

With the game firmly in grasp, Smith began to experiment with the lineup, with additions such as sophomore third baseman Joonsung Park, graduate right fielder Robbie Hamchuk and sophomore designated hitter Keegan O'Hearn. After a stagnant few innings, the trio found success, beginning with a single by Hamchuk while Park and O'Hearn loaded the bases off of walks. With a powerful double by junior left fielder Jonathan Kim, all three hustled home to bring in three more runs for the Wolverines.

"When you can pick and choose and ultimately reward them with opportunities they've earned, you try to do that," Smith said of the bench. "... Robbie Hamchuk coming in and getting two hits off the bench was awesome."

Up 9-0, Michigan needed only one more run to seal away its run-rule victory. And Inge delivered just that, sliding home off of a single by Hamchuk to secure the series sweep for the Wolverines.

While not its flashiest victory, Sunday's game, and the Mount St. Mary's series as a whole, showcased something much more important for Michigan — its ability to win even without a fervent offense. Home runs and power hitters don't need to be the standard for this Wolverines' offense. Spelled out in the scoreline, it's clear that when playing simple, smart ball, Michigan can still produce the ideal results.

SLIDE

Bela Fischer, Akul Gunukula, Varun Tandon/DAILY

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